Spotland Bridge New Mill, Rochdale

Statement of Heritage Significance & Impact:

Window Replacement



May 2020

Marion Barter Associates Ltd
HISTORIC BUILDINGS ADVICE

Spotland Bridge New Mill

Heritage Impact Statement: Window Replacement

prepared for

Spotland Bridge Mill Ltd

by

Marion Barter Associates Ltd

May 2020

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Report

This report is submitted to accompany an application to replace existing timber windows with PVCu windows on the west mill at Spotland Bridge New Mill. This follows pre-application discussions with Rochdale Council in 2019 and a site meeting on 14 February 2020.

This statement of heritage significance and impact should be read in conjunction with the drawings and a report with supporting justification from Lambert Smith Hampton. The current proposal is for all the windows on west mill (Building 1) to be replaced, apart from the 1930s engine house windows and those to the office, recently repaired.

A report on the heritage significance and the impact of window replacement at the mill was first compiled in 2019 as part of pre-application consultation; this slightly amended report was commissioned in May 2020 by Richard Moffatt on behalf of Nick Crewe and Gary Ellis of Spotland Bridge Mills Ltd from the Marion Barter Associates Ltd.

The mill is Grade II listed and within a Conservation Area; Listed building consent is required for all works that affect the character of a listed building, under the 1990 Planning Act.

1.2 Purpose of the Report

The report provides:

- A summary of the significance of the buildings,
- An assessment of the significance of the windows at the mill,
- An assessment of the impact of replacement windows on the significance of the mill.

1.3 Location

The address is Spotland Bridge Mill, Spotland Bridge, Rochdale. The National Grid Reference is SD8852613831. The local planning authority is Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

1.4 Acknowledgements

This report has been written by Marion Barter BA MA IHBC. All photographs are by the author unless otherwise stated. Extracts from historic OS maps are reproduced with the permission of Touchstones, Rochdale. Thanks are due to Lesley Dunkley and Norman Redhead at the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service for assistance with research using the HER in 2019, and permission to use images from the 1980s mills survey.

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2.0 SUMMARY OF MILL: HISTORY, DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

2.1 Context: Spotland Bridge

Spotland Bridge New Mill was built in Spotland Bridge in the 1830s, on the west side of the River Spodden and close to the bridge. The mill is part of the mechanised phase of textile industry in this area in the early 19th century, but there had been fulling mills along the River Spodden since at least the early 17th century. 19th century development brought larger steam-powered mills and dye works into the area, which was otherwise still largely rural, as the 1844 map below shows.

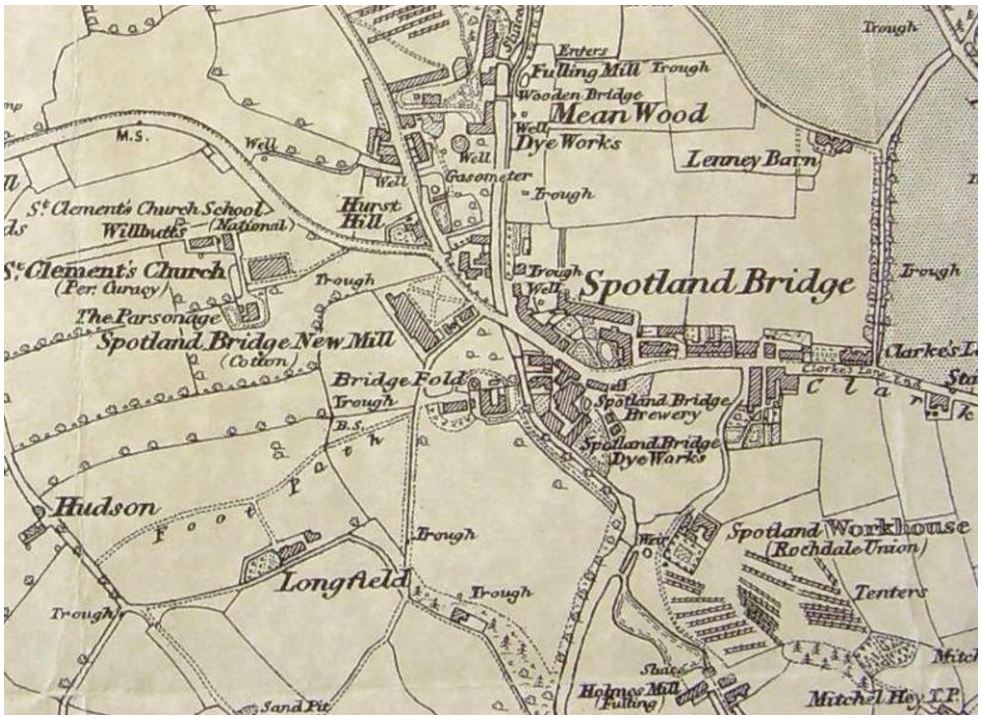

Fig.1: 1st edition OS map, surveyed 1844 (Touchstones, Rochdale)

In the second half of the 19th century, the area was urbanised as new works were built, and workers' housing and other buildings spread along roads near the bridge. In the early 20th century, new bridges were built across the river, for trams, and more housing was built. After WW2, the decline of the cotton industry and transportation changes altered the area; the tram depot and some mills were demolished but Spotland Bridge New Mill survived, used for a variety of manufacturing and business processes. The area was designated a conservation area, to protect its industrial character, in 2007.

2.2. Summary History of Spotland Bridge new Mill

The 1980s cotton mill survey by Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU) and the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (RCHME) provides a good summary of the history of the mill (Spotland Bridge New Mill report dated October 1989 and HER number 5064.1.0), with an entry in the published inventory for this mill.[1] There is additional information in Touchstones Local Studies Centre in Rochdale, which adds to the findings of the1980s study; the research for this report enables a fuller interpretation of the mill site.

The mill was built on a field west of the river at Spotland Bridge, for Joseph Butterworth & Co Ltd, for spinning cotton, shortly before 1834; at this date the mill is referred to in Poor Law records for Rochdale as having a boiler house, engine house, chimney and gas plant. The mill and the house are clearly shown on the 5 foot: 1 mile 1st edition OS map surveyed in 1843 and published in 1851(Fig.2).



Fig.2: the west mill, house and gas works on the 1851 OS map (5ft:1ml, surveyed 1843) (Touchstones, Rochdale)

[1] Williams and Farnie, pp175-176

The mill machinery was run by steam-power, with the engine house, boiler house and chimney built at the same time as the mill. There was a gas plant at the mill, used for lighting the mill. The office to the north gable end was added by the time of a valuation in 1863, which also refers to the closet (lavatory) tower. The staircase tower on the north-west corner was an original feature, and probably contained the main entrance for workers.

In 1888 the mill had 17,424 spindles, producing 18s/32s supertwist, according to the *Textile Trade Directory* entry for that year, when Joseph Butterworth was listed as the owner in the section on cotton spinners. The mill changed hands in 1893, when it was bought by the textile finishing firm Samuel Heap and Son Ltd, to produce flannelette.[2]

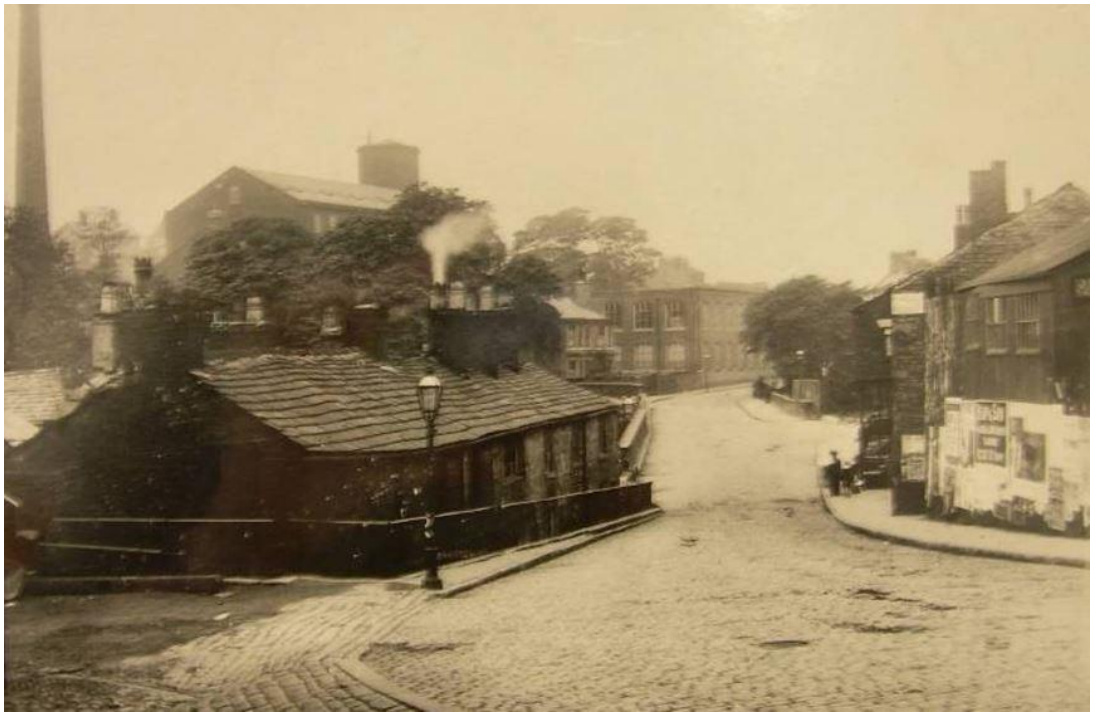

Fig.3: Spotland Bridge New Mill and warehouse in the late 1890s, from SE of Spotland Bridge (undated photograph, Touchstones, Rochdale)

In 1895, Heaps built a 2-storey warehouse to the east of the mill, for storing 'grey cloth', shown in historic photographs at Touchstones (Fig.3). This structure is now 4-storey; a third floor was added to the warehouse in 1908 and the top floor in 1912. Research into the firm of Samuel Heap by Boyd Harte shows that this eastern building was not built as a mill, as suggested by Williams and Farnie[3]. The 1910 photograph

[2] The information on the history of Samuel Heap & Sons is from an unpublished thesis by Negley Boyd Harte, part of which is available in Touchstones, Rochdale.
[3] Williams and Farnie, p176

(Fig.4) shows pale brickwork to the top part of the stair tower, indicating it had been rebuilt or raised in height, probably for a water tank (Fig.4). By this date the windows on the mill had been replaced with the current 9-pane windows; the original windows in the 1830s mill would have been multi-paned with smaller panes of glass.



Fig. 4: the mill and warehouse from the north in 1910 (Touchstones Rochdale)

By the end of the First World War, the mill was run by Messrs Samuel Turner and Co Ltd, a textile company. Samuel Turner was a well-known Rochdale Liberal who was also managing director of Turner Brothers Asbestos Company. At this date the mill was still being run with a steam engine, according to an advert for a handyman to 'assist in the boiler and engine house' (Rochdale Observer 14 March 1917). The 1928 OS map shows numerous small outbuildings to the west side of the mill and two bridges between the east and west buildings.

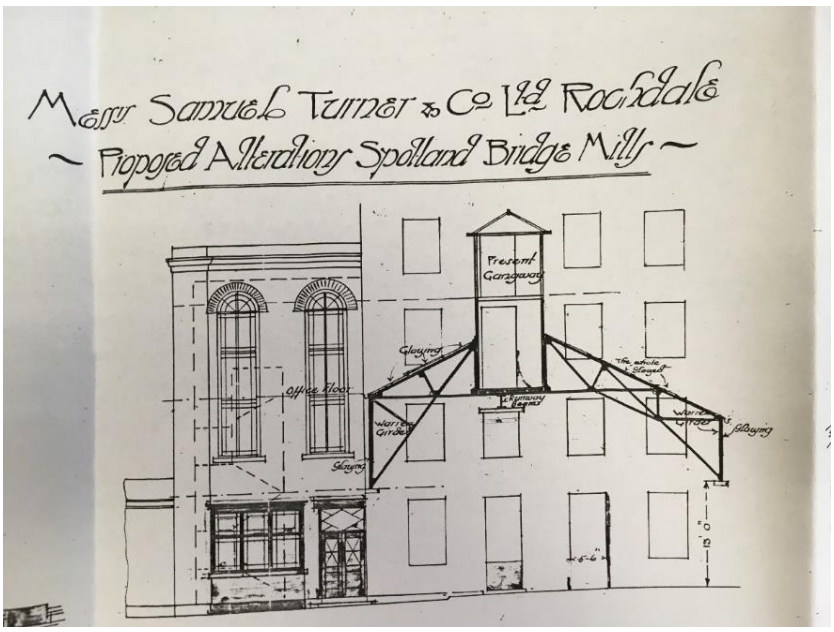

Fig.5: plans for alterations to the engine house and a new canopy, c1935 (GMAAS)

By the mid-1930s the mill had been converted to electrical power; plans for Samuel Turner & Co Ltd show the engine house converted for offices, stores, WCs, a new internal staircase and lift (Fig. 5).The plans show new windows with margin-lights for the converted engine house but do not record the windows then on the rest of the mill. The doorway and bay window were also part of this 1930s phase. The south gable windows to the engine house were probably also inserted as part of this work.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the mill was run by Alderglen, a clothing manufacturer. In 1987 the mill was bought by Highcliffe Estates and by 1989 it housed 34 small firms (GMAU/RCHME report dated October 1989).

The mill was first listed in 1996. In 2007, the mill was included in the Spotland Bridge Conservation Area, designated by Rochdale Council (Appendix 2).

Planning permission and LBC (Ref. 08/D51589 and LBC 08/D51590) were granted for a residential conversion designed by Pozzoni Architects for Biz Space in 2008, renewed in 2011 (Ref.11/D54883 and LBC Ref.11/D54884); this scheme was not implemented. The residential scheme included new timber windows with double-glazing. The site was acquired by the present owner in 2017 and is managed by Spotland Bridge Mills Ltd; space in the buildings is let to separate business tenants, although upper floors are unoccupied pending refurbishment..

2.3 Architectural and Industrial Context: Greater Manchester Textile Mills

The key account of the textile industry in the Greater Manchester area is the volume written by Mike Williams and D.A. Farnie for Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU) and the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) published in 1992.

Spotland Bridge New Mill is typical of the multi-storey cotton mills built between the 1790s and c1825 in the region. Many of these first-generation steam-powered mills were up to six storeys high, with 8-storey mills in Manchester where land was at a premium. Mills were generally built of hand-made brick, with local stone for window sills and other details. Roofs were slate. Pictorial records show that these early mills had small-paned windows, although almost none of these survive. Engine houses are recognisable by their tall arched windows, with adjacent boiler house and chimney.

The recent 2017 mills survey undertaken by the University of Salford for Historic England updated the findings of the 1992 mills survey; almost half the mills that existed in 1992 have since been demolished. In the Greater Manchester region there were 972 mills in the 1980s, and by 2017 there were 540, a 44% rate of loss.

In Rochdale 229 mills were recorded in 1992, but only 102 mills had survived by the time of the mills survey in 2017, a rate of loss of 48%. 12 of the extant mills are listed buildings. Of the surviving mills in Rochdale, 25.4% have been assessed as 'at risk'. In the Spotland and Falinge area, four out of the six mills recorded in 1992 remain, of which Spotland Bridge New Mill is the only listed example. In Spotland Bridge Conservation Area, only two mills survive, Spotland Bridge New Mills and Spotland Bridge Mill across the river which is to be demolished.

3.0 SPOTLAND BRIDGE NEW MILL TODAY

The mill complex comprises a group of buildings which were built in two main phases, with additional phases of minor alteration and addition:

- Phase 1: c1833, west mill, boiler house, engine house, chimney and the house.
- Phase 2: 1895 – 1912, east warehouse.

For convenience, the buildings are numbered in the following description, with reference to their historic functions.

- Building 1: west mill of c1833
- Building 2: engine house of c1833, altered c1935
- Building 3: boiler house of c1833, altered
- Building 4: chimney of c1833
- Building 5: house of c1833, altered
- Building 6: warehouse of 1895, with floors added 1910 and1912

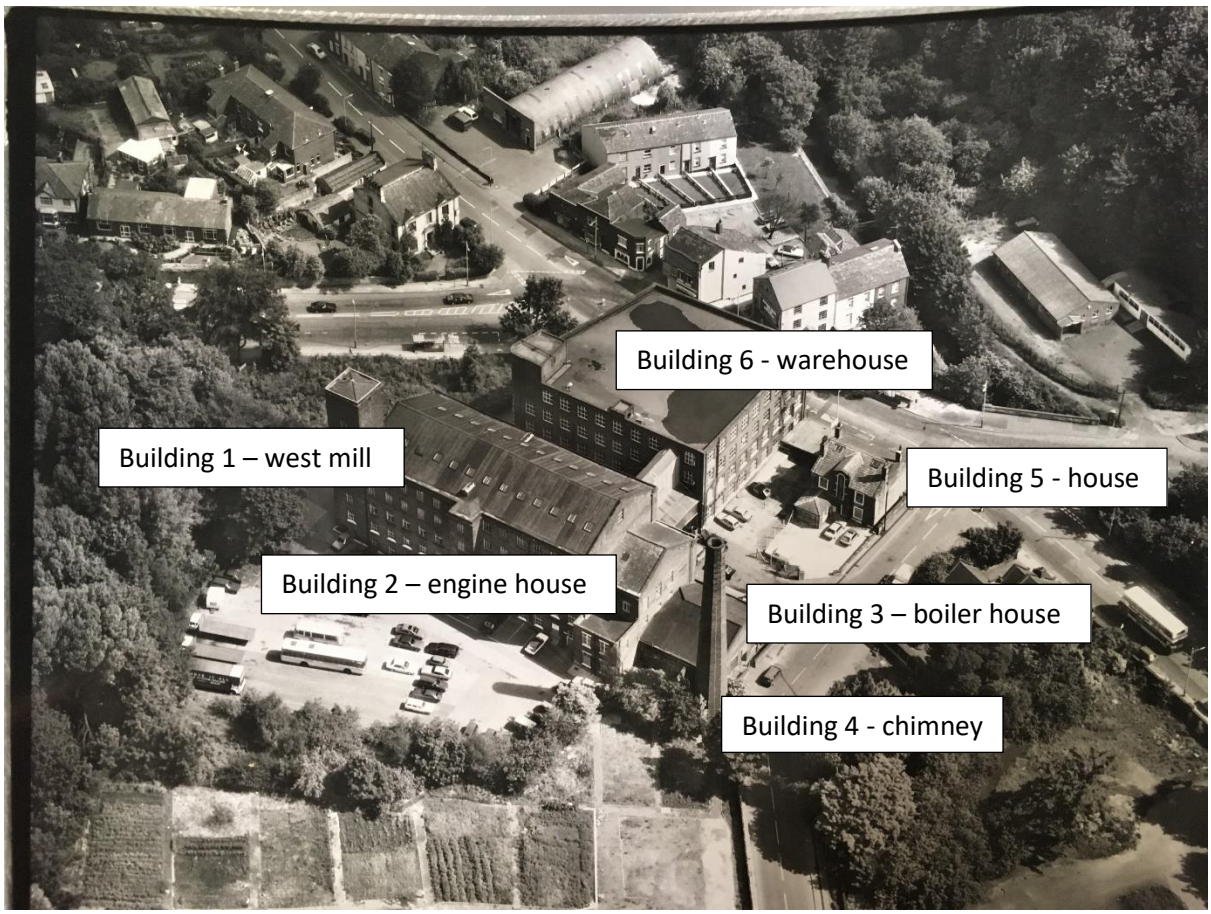

Fig.6: the mill in the 1980s from the south-west (GMAAS)

3.1 The Mill (Building 1)

The mill was last used for textile and clothing manufacturing in the 1970s, and has been partly let for light industrial or business uses since the 1980s; the upper floors are currently vacant. The 5-storey (plus attic) mill is constructed of red brick with a Welsh slate roof; the pitched roof is arranged longitudinally and was built with rooflights to light the upper floor working area in the roof-space/attic. The gable end verges are plain but the eaves are finished with a concave stone cornice and plain blocking course and lead-lined gutter. The same detail is used on the mill, engine and boiler houses, privy tower and office. To the north-west corner is a projecting square staircase tower and a rectangular privy tower projects from the mid-point of the west elevation, both probably original.

A bridge connects the second and third floors of the west mill to the east warehouse, added between 1890 and 1908 when windows either end were altered for doorways. The canopy with a steel structure, either side of the bridge, was added in c1935 (Fig.8). Attached to the underside of the bridge is a travelling crane or hoist mechanism.



Figure 7: west and south elevations



Figure 8: bridge and east elevation (right)

3.2 Mill Windows

The side elevations are each thirteen bays long with a regular pattern of fenestration, with timber windows recessed in reveals, with brick heads and stone sills. The pattern of the existing mill windows is not consistent and there are at least two different patterns; most of the windows are 9-pane with fixed glazing or opening pivot lights to the top. There are also later replacements in timber with larger panes of glass, probably a 20th century alteration and side-hung casements in various patterns on the fire escapes. There is most variation on the west elevation (Fig.9), where the second floor has large-paned windows with hopper lights, probably dating to the second half of the 20th century and fire-escapes have side-hung casements.



Fig.9: variations in windows, west elevation

The south gable-end of the mill is blind except for a single attic 9-pane non-opening window. Windows on the north gable end were 9-pane windows with a variety of opening lights (mainly pivoting top-lights), before replacement in uPVC since 2017.



Fig.10: windows on north gable end in 2017

The 9-pane windows are not the originals; the 1830s mill would have had multi-paned windows with small panes when first built ,[4] similar to those depicted in historic images of early 19th century mills, such as an engraving of Ancoats by William Pyne, published in 1831,[5] and images of cotton mills published by Barfoot in 1840.[6] The existing 9-pane windows are similar in pattern (but not detail) to those on the warehouse first built in 1895 and may have been replaced around the same time as part of Heaps' investment in the mill.

Where windows have opening lights, these are mainly pivoting top-lights, visible externally due to the thicker meeting rail.

The glazing bars are simply detailed with chamfers to the joinery on the inner face. The glass appears to be mass-produced without the variations that characterise older crown glass, for example.

The mill windows are in relatively good condition, given the lack of recent maintenance. This is likely to be due to the quality of the timber used in the construction industry during the 19th and early 20th century; in this period windows were made with imported pine from slow-growing trees which contained a low proportion of sapwood. This timber is much less susceptible to decay than the fast-grown plantation timber used since the mid 20th century, which has a shorter life due to the high proportion of sapwood.[7]

At ground floor level and to the covered bridges, some windows were altered to form door openings, in the 20th century.

The mill office on the north elevation has two types of windows expressing two phases, with smaller timber sashes and a doorway to the ground floor and larger windows of two types to the first floor.

3.3. The Mill interior

The interior is not described in detail, as it is not affected by the windows proposal. In summary, the mill floors are characterised by two rows of cast-iron columns supporting transverse timber beams and joists. The soffits of floor boards are visible, with later boards laid on top. All surfaces, including brick wall linings, are finished in lime-wash or paint to maximise light levels in the mill (Fig.11). Timbers are likely to be imported pine, probably from the Baltic.

[4] Williams and Farnie, p56
[5] Miller and Wild, p80
[6] https://www.flickr.com/photos/manchesterarchiveplus/6207253704/in/photostream/
[7] Information from Historic England, *Traditional Windows*, 2017, p36

Cast-iron bearing boxes and oil staining on the south wall of the mill relate to the moving line shafts which ran the machinery. The location of missing line shafting is evident from the bolting faces on columns.



Fig.11: typical mill interior with cast iron columns and timber beams

The roof trusses consist of queen-strut trusses, which allows for an open roof space to be used for storage or manufacturing. Rooflights were part of the original roof, set below the lower purlins (the roof was originally lined with boards at collar level).

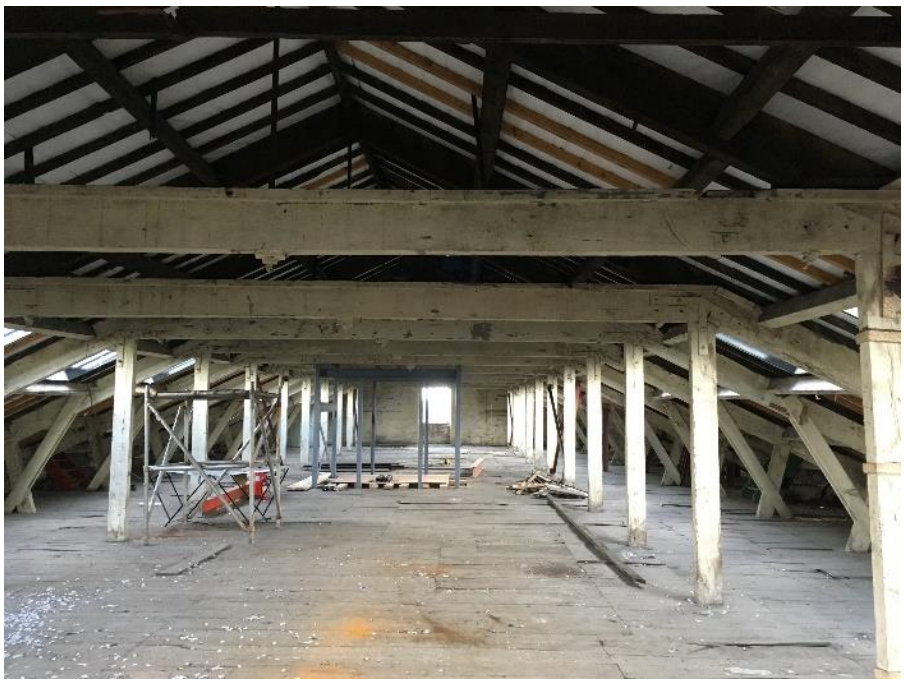

Figure 12: roof space in 2019

The upper floors are accessed via the original stone staircase in the north-west stair tower; this has painted brick walls and stone slab landings. On the west side of each mill floor doorways accessed the privy tower. The access doorways to the bridges on the second and third floors have sliding steel fire doors like those in the warehouse, probably early 20th century.

3.4 The Engine House (Building 2)

The engine house is an original part of the mill, also built in the 1830s, with matching moulded stone cornice and parapets. The 3-storey structure is brick, two bays wide and originally the same depth as the mill; the rear (west) extension is later. The roof is Welsh slate. The existing entrance faces east, part of alterations in c1935 when the tall east windows were altered and doorway and office bay window added (recently repaired). The west elevation has been altered with an added 2-storey flat-roofed extension; this was first built in the late 19th century, but was altered in the 1930s for staff toilets. On the south elevation, the flat-headed windows to the first and second floors are 1930s insertions. These and the windows to the west extension (altered for toilets) have six large panes with inward-opening hopper lights to the top.



Fig.13: engine house with 2-storey extension, from the south-west



Figure 14: 1930s windows to engine house, east elevation

The engine house interior has inserted first and second floors dating from c1935 with ground floor reception office (lodge), staircase and service lift.

3.5 Building 3 - The boiler house

The boiler house is part of the 1830s mill, built with the chimney and engine house for the mill's steam power plant. It is a single-storey structure built against the south gable-end of the engine house, with a low-pitched slate roof with a half-hip to the north end, probably altered in the 1930s to enable windows to be installed on the first floor gable end of the engine house. The external structure has similar features to the mill with brick walls, corner pilasters and a stone cornice and blocking course or parapet. Historically the roof had a louvred ridge vent, removed by 1989. The structure has been repaired, with some alterations to the form of the roof and the west side. The south gable-end of the boiler house has four tall windows facing the road, each 9-pane, but one window has been altered to form a door.



Fig:15: boiler house from the south (2019)

3.6 Building 4 – chimney

The octagonal brick chimney is part of the 1830s mill, built for the mill's steam power plant. The tapered structure appears to have been rebuilt in brick with metal straps to the upper section; it may have had a moulded stone capping, removed at an unknown date. It is not included in the current application.

3.7 Building 5 – former house

The house to the south-east corner of the site was built in the early 19th century, probably for the site manager. It is stone-built with a slate roof. It was altered for a canteen and caretaker's accommodation in the early 20th century and is now in use as an undertakers' office. The front (Fig.16) faces east towards Edenfield Road with double-height bay windows. Some alterations were made before the present owner acquired the mill, including the replacement of windows, the removal of chimneys and a rear gabled dormer. This building is not included in the current application.

3.8 Building 6 – former warehouse

The 4-storey building was first built as a 2-storey warehouse in 1895 by Samuel Heap & Sons, raised by two floors in 1910 and 1914. As shown by research by Boyd Harte, it was not built as a mill. The building is 9 bays wide from east to west, but the west wall is 2 bays longer than the east wall which is of 8 bays. The concrete roof is flat, with a low brick parapet with flat stone copings.



Fig.16: the front of the house and south and east elevations of the warehouse

The windows are timber 9-pane lights with segmental brick heads and stone sills. The centre panes at the top of each window are either hopper opening lights or fitted with louvre vents. On the ground floor, some windows have been altered to form doorways. The main entrance into the warehouse is from the west elevation facing the mill, where alterations to the elevation relate to a previous infill shed. There are added metal fire escapes on the south and north elevations.

The warehouse is not included in the application to replace windows.

4.0 SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 The concept of significance

Significance is defined in the NPPF (*National Planning Policy Framework*, 2018) as the 'value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from the heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting'.

The NPPF states that, in determining applications, local authorities require 'an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected…As a minimum the relevant historic environment record (HER) should be consulted and heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary' (para 189). This report provides a proportionate level of significance assessment for this heritage asset. It is good practice to understand the significance of heritage assets early in the design process (PPG 23 July 2019, para 008). Different heritage interests are listed in the NPPF: archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic. Historic England published guidance on compiling *Statements of Heritage Significance* in 2019.

Measuring the level of significance is helpful when making decisions about heritage and balancing significance against other public benefits. The NPPF advises that the more important the heritage asset the greater weight should be given to its conservation (para. 193). Measuring significance relies on a combination of comparative analysis, an understanding of the building and site's development and history and the wider context. Historic England guidance does not provide a hierarchy of levels, although a hierarchy is set out by ICOMOS, broadly as follows:

- **very high/exceptional** – an asset important at the highest national or international levels, including Grade I and II* listed buildings and landscapes, our most important scheduled monuments and World Heritage Sites. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be wholly exceptional.
- **High** – a designated asset important at a national level, including Grade II listed buildings and some conservation areas. May also include non-designated archaeology of national importance. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be exceptional.
- **Medium** – an undesignated asset important at a local to regional level, including local list (non-statutory) buildings and unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to a conservation area. Includes some conservation areas and also less significant parts of listed buildings. Buildings, landscapes and structures in this category should be retained where possible, although there is usually scope for adaptation.

- **Low** – structure or feature of very limited heritage or cultural value. May include insignificant interventions to listed buildings, and modest buildings that do not contribute positively to a conservation area. The removal or adaptation of structures in this category is usually acceptable where the work will enhance a related heritage asset.
- **Negligible** – structure or feature of no heritage value and structures or features that may harm the value of a heritage asset. Removal of such features can be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.

4.2 Significance of Spotland Bridge New Mills

Spotland Bridge New Mills has an overall high level of significance as a good example of a multi-phase textile manufacturing complex, which is unusually intact. The west mill (Building 1) has high significance as a good example of a medium sized early 19th century cotton mill, built with a steam power plant (boiler house, chimney and engine house). The mill site has high significance, as an ensemble; there have been only minor losses since the key elements were constructed. The multi-storey west mill has high significance for historic, architectural and archaeological interests. As this is the only element affected by the window replacement proposal, the later warehouse and former house are not discussed in this section.

Following the methodology for assessment of heritage significance set out in Historic England's Conservation Principles, the mill is considered to have the following heritage values or interests:

Historical Value

The mill complex has high historical value as a good example of a cotton mill first built in 1833 by a local manufacturer, with a multi-storey mill and steam power plant. The mill illustrates the evolution of this part of Rochdale for textile-related industry, and is one of only two mills left in the Spotland Bridge conservation area. The mill complex reflects the development and expansion of the textile industry in the late 19th and early 20th century with a warehouse added in three phases to the east of the mill. The site has been altered and adapted since textile manufacturing ceased, but the different elements are still legible, demonstrating the robustness of the building type. The mill is associated with several Rochdale firms founded and run by prominent local men: Joseph Butterworth, Samuel Heap and Samuel Turner, illustrating the high status of local textile entrepreneurs who contributed to the development of the Spodden Valley. For example, Samuel Turner (1840-1924), one of three sons of the founder of the textile firm was mayor of Rochdale in 1901-3 and knighted in 1914; the family's wealth came particularly from asbestos (Turner Brothers and later Turner & Newall Ltd), but their original cotton business was initially

established at Clod Mill, Spotland and the firm took over Spotland Bridge New Mill in the early 20th century.

The 1830s west mill has high significance for historical values, as a good example of an early steam-powered mill with contemporary power plant buildings.

Archaeological Value

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service were consulted about this site. The Historic Environment Record (HER) holds detailed records for the mill, including a copy of the 1989 report and archive created as part of the GMAU/RCHME Manchester mills survey.

Spotland Bridge New Mills is of high significance for its evidential and archaeological value. It was in use as a textile or clothing mill for over 140 years from 1833, and retains most of the structures related to the spinning of cotton. The buildings on the site are relatively intact, reflect the historic functions and make the complex legible.

The loss of some historic fabric and all the machinery has slightly diminished archaeological interest, but the fabric of the building provides evidence for the location of machinery and power transmission. Below-ground archaeology may reveal more about the early development of the site, particularly of missing structures such as the gas plant and other missing structures. The site has medium to high archaeological potential.

Architectural Value

The multi-storey west mill building is the dominant element on the site due to its scale, bulk and massing. The external mill features comprising the external brick walls, regular pattern of fenestration, the stone cornice and parapet detailing and slate roof have high significance. The tall arched windows to the engine house also have high architectural significance. The mill windows are likely to be replacements for the originals, probably of late 19th or early 20th century date; these windows have medium to high significance as windows typical of mills in the region.

The interior of the mill has high significance for the beam and column floor structure, and the large spaces. Inserted elements are of low significance, for example the later hoist in the south-west corner and block-work partitions on the ground floor of the mill.

The engine house retains the typical tall windows relating to the original use, but the staircase, lift, window joinery, inserted floors and partitions date from conversion for office use in the 1930s; these features have medium significance as part of a later phase of alteration after steam power ceased.

Aesthetic value

Spotland Bridge New Mills is a key landmark in the Spotland Bridge townscape and the chimney provides a focal point for the area; this aspect of the site has high aesthetic value. There are good views of the site from the public realm, with the former house, chimney and both large buildings important in the local townscape. Within the site, the inner 'street' between the two mills is a strong visual feature, along with the boiler house, engine house and mill group which increase in height from south to north. The aesthetic value of the site has been enhanced by the removal various infill sheds since 2017.

Communal value

The mill has some communal significance as part of the conservation area; it is part of Spotland Bridge's heritage and very visible from the surrounding roads. It was assessed as part of the 1980s Greater Manchester Textile Mills Survey, a collaborative project between the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit and the RCHME and has recently been reviewed with funding from Historic England. The community has not been consulted on this aspect of the building's heritage significance.

4.3 Spotland Bridge Conservation Area

Spotland Bridge Conservation Area was first designated in 2007, including the mill. The conservation area was extended in 2013 to include St Clement's Church, grids of workers' housing to the north and land along Mellor Street. Documents relating to the conservation area are available online at https://consultations.rochdale.gov.uk/strategic-planning/spotlandbridge/

For the 2013 consultation, the conservation area was divided into ten character areas (not all were approved by the Council). The mill is within Area 1, whose key characteristics were identified by Rochdale Council in 2013:

- Grouping of textile mills and ancillary buildings that form a remarkable townscape representing the whole of the cotton industry from its tiny Georgian beginnings based on water power, through the dramatic developments of the Victorian phase, based on steam, to the final large scale developments of the Edwardian period, largely based on electricity and modern transport.

- Spotland Bridge New Mill and Spotland New Mill are impressive 'cathedrals of bricks', significantly contributing to the character of the conservation area. Their chimneys are prominent townscape features of importance to the area's identity.

- The River Spodden, Mellor Street and Spotland Bridge are the main axes along which this well-preserved industrial settlement was established. Individually, many of the buildings have their own historic and/or architectural interest.

4.4 Contribution of Setting to Significance

Setting is an important aspect of a listed building, protected through the 1990 Planning Act; setting is defined in the NPPF as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'. The mill has a prominent position close to Spotland Bridge and there are good views of the mill from the surrounding roads. The setting around the bridge and road junctions has been altered by highways improvements, but still contributes to the significance of the mill.

The setting to the west of the mill on either side of Bridgefold Road has been altered since the mill and tram depot were demolished, and new brick housing built; this is a neutral part of the setting. To the north of the mill a wooded hillside screens the Church and the parsonage from the mill, which contributes positively to the setting.

4.5 Significance of the mill windows

The Historic England guidance on traditional windows relates to domestic windows, not to windows on large-scale industrial buildings such as mills. However, some of the advice is relevant to all historic buildings: it states that windows 'are often of considerable importance to the significance of listed buildings. They can contribute to significance through their design, materials and workmanship. The strength of that contribution depends on the age, style and historic function of the particular building'. [8]

The list entry (Appendix 1) does not refer to the details of the window, although it gives a detailed account of the interior. The current timber windows are late 19th or early 20th century replacements for the original windows. There is a variety of windows on the mill, but the dominant window type is a 9-pane timber window, with either fixed glazing or opening lights to the top. The 9-pane windows are similar in pattern (but vary in detail) on both the mill and the later warehouse building. The windows are considered to have medium to high significance. If they were small-paned 1830s windows they would have very high significance, as a rare survival.

Where the 9-pane mill windows have been replaced with larger-paned windows to different designs, probably in the 1930s or later in the 20th century, these later

[8] Historic England, *Traditional Windows,* 2017, p62

windows have low significance. The distinctive tall arched window openings to the former engine house with joinery installed in the 1930s, have high significance.

In summary, the 9-pane windows contribute to the significance of the mill, but are not its most important element; due to the vast scale of the building, the window details are relatively incidental to the character of the elevations, compared with, say, a listed cottage where the details of the windows would be proportionally much more important to the overall significance of the building. The relatively fine glazing bars relate to the use of timber for the sections; where joinery is intact and in good condition it has high significance.

5.0 IMPACT OF REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

5.1 Introduction & Policy Context

1990 Act. Listed buildings are protected by the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. Listed building consent is required for all works that affect the character of a listed building, including demolition and alterations (sections 7 to 10). Under section 66 (1), local authorities have a duty to pay 'special regard to the desirability of preserving' listed buildings or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

Rochdale Planning Policy. Rochdale's policies on heritage are in the Core Strategy adopted in 2016 and in saved UDP policies BE16, 17 and 18 (latter relating to conservation areas). Policy P2 of the Core Strategy states that the council will protect and enhance the borough's heritage, and lists six types of key heritage assets in the borough which include 'engineering heritage, including mills, canals and railways'.

The NPPF. Policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out the government's policies on all heritage assets, including listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeology and non-designated assets such as local list buildings. Further guidance on the NPPF is given in the online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

In determining applications, the NPPF states that local authorities should take account of:

a) 'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation,

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and

c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness' (paragraph 192)

Local authorities have to give great weight to the conservation of a designated heritage asset, when considering the impact of proposed development (the more important the asset the greater the weight should be) (para 193). Any harm to a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification (para 194). The justification for the replacement windows is discussed below and in the Lambert Smith Hampton report.

Proposals may enhance, have a neutral impact or cause harm to a heritage asset. Harm should be avoided and minimised, and if a level of harm that is 'less than substantial' is likely to be caused, the local authority has to balance this against public benefits (para 196). Substantial harm such as the demolition or substantial loss of significance of a listed building should be exceptional; this level of harm has to be very robustly justified, against stringent tests in the NPPF (para 195). It is therefore important to establish the level of harm likely to be caused by a proposal.

For proposals that cause 'less than substantial harm', the public benefits of the scheme can be weighed against the harm. In the case of the PVCu replacement windows, the potential public benefits are discussed in the separate report by Lambert Smith Hampton; securing the optimum viable use of the heritage asset is a public benefit for the mill (NPPF para 196), in 'support of its long-term conservation' (PPG, 23.07.2019 para 020).

Historic England guidance

Historic England provides advice[9] on window repair and replacement in their guidance *Traditional Windows*. However, this guidance specifically refers to domestic windows, not to windows on large scale industrial buildings. The advice advocates the retention of windows that contribute to the significance of listed buildings, stating that windows should be retained and repaired where possible, and where they are beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies. The guidance does not oppose double glazing where new windows are agreed, but advises that the different character and appearance of PVCu windows is 'highly likely to make them unsuitable for older buildings, particularly those that are listed or in conservation areas… Their design, detailing and operation make them look different to traditional windows'.

Historic England also provides guidance on mill conversions; *Engines of Prosperity*,[10] highlights the high rate of demolition of North West mills (almost 50% in Greater Manchester since 1990) and examines case studies that set out the challenges and recommend good practice. Among the issues considered is window replacement; at the Grade II Tower Mill in Dukinfield (recently renovated for cotton production), the report notes that 'conforming to heritage concerns regarding window replacement has proven to be time-consuming and expensive… an agreement was reached on a historically sensitive design… the replacement of over 200 bespoke windows at a cost of approximately £1250 each'.[11] A pragmatic and collaborative approach is recommended, involving the local authority at an early stage.

[9] Historic England, *Traditional Windows*, 2017, p6
[10] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/engines-of-prosperity-new-uses-old-mills/engines-of-prosperity-nw-main-report/
[11] Historic England, *Engines of Prosperity*, p21

5.2 The impact of replacement windows on the significance of the mill

The mill's existing 9-pane timber windows have plain, relatively narrow glazing bars and a white-painted finish; the windows are likely to date from the late 19th/early 20th century. Windows with and without opening lights have a fairly uniform appearance due to the narrow timber sections used for the opening lights. These windows have medium to high significance.

The replacement of the existing timber windows with PVCu will maintain the overall pattern of openings: a grid of windows with stone sills and brick heads, as illustrated in the photographs below, and with each window divided into 9 panes.



Fig.17: windows on mill's north gable-end in 2017 (left) and as replaced (right)

Some new windows have been installed on the north gable-end without LBC. Advice was sought from a Building Inspector on the size of opening light as most of the previous windows had no opening lights, so there was little ventilation. The old windows have been retained inside the mill for comparison (Fig.18). The application proposal is for all the windows on West Mill to be replaced in PVCu, similar to those already installed (apart from the office and tall engine house windows). The recently installed PVCu windows have wider glazing bars and opening lights that are more clearly expressed than those in the existing windows, due to the thicker sections required for strength using this material.

Instead of a pale painted finish, the windows will be coloured black/dark grey as part of the manufactured product, to minimise the visual impact.



Fig.18: replacement window on mill's north gable-end (left) compared with the previous windows (right)

On a large scale building such as a mill, it could be argued that the details are less critical to the character of the building than on a smaller historic building such as a house, where windows are seen at closer range and make a relatively more important contribution to significance, often incorporating fine details to complement the architecture of the house. In this case, the large scale of the mill with a grid of window openings is the dominant feature of the architecture and the details of the windows are a secondary element, designed to be functional rather than decorative.

Replacing the existing timber windows with PVCu will affect the detailed appearance of the windows, but not the overall fenestration pattern. The change from traditional timber to PVCu will cause some harm to the mill, as it was built using natural sustainable materials: brick, stone, slate and timber are part of its character and contribute to significance.

The detail of replacement PVCu windows will not be obvious in longer views of the mill from surrounding streets in the conservation area; the overall pattern of windows on the mill will be retained. The scale of change on the conservation area is considered to be minor and the overall impact on the conservation area is slight.

It is considered that the replacement of all timber windows on the mill will constitute a moderate change to the listed mill as a whole, affecting an element of medium to high significance; this will cause slight to moderate harm to the listed building. This

level of harm is 'less than substantial'; it is important to balance the harm against the public benefit (NPPF para 196).

5.3 Justification and public benefits

The PPG states that 'harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance, and provided the harm is minimised' (PPG, 23.07.2019, para 015).

During a period of gradual decline in the late 20th century, the mill was neglected and a backlog of repairs and maintenance built-up. The current owner is addressing defects such as the structural integrity of mill floor beams and also removing intrusive alterations (such as modern additions and extraneous signage and building services), to better reveal the significance of the heritage asset. Historic timber windows have been repaired to the office at the north end of the mill and the 1930s engine house windows will also be repaired (Fig.17). Replacing other mill windows is part of the owner's overall strategy to upgrade the mill to ensure it has a viable use and all floors can be occupied; the owner's vision is to refurbish the mill to achieve an end result similar to Blue Pit Mill, successfully refurbished by the same owner. Refurbishing the mill to secure its long-term viable future is a public benefit.

Business and light industrial uses (B1) occupy only parts of the lower two floors of the West Mill, generating a very low rental income. The upper floors are vacant and not currently suitable for occupation; before these floors can be occupied, the interiors require upgrading with improved access, welfare and ancillary facilities and other details such as thermal insulation, fire and acoustic separation. These works are the subject of a separate application.

In the Greater Manchester mills survey of 2017 (Rochdale survey report), the mill was assessed as 'vulnerable' (risk category 4), due to it being 'partially occupied' and in 'fair' condition (University of Salford, 2017, p49). Enabling the full occupation of the mill for a viable long-term use that is consistent with its conservation will remove the mill from the 'vulnerable' category.

The mill has been altered on numerous occasions since it was first built in the 1830s, in response to changing technology and function; changes were made to doors and windows; hoists, lifts, bridges and staircases were inserted; welfare facilities provided and improved. The robust industrial character of the historic mill enables the buildings to accommodate a reasonable level of change without harming its overall heritage significance, as part of the latest chapter in the life of the mill.

A justification for the PVCu replacement windows is set out in in the Lambert Smith Hampton report. In summary, the reason for proposing non-traditional windows is to

minimise costs, both in the initial outlay and in the medium-term on maintenance, to ensure the project is viable. To protect the long-term future of this mill, it is essential that the building has a viable long-term use consistent with the conservation of the building's character. The end-use needs to generate sufficient revenue to fund the completion of essential repairs and to support the long-term maintenance of all the buildings and structures that are part of the mill complex, including the chimney. This is a challenge in low-value areas such Rochdale, an issue discussed in the *Engines of Prosperity* report.

There are precedents for different approaches to replacement windows on listed mills in Greater Manchester and the North West, where viability and achieving full occupancy is recognised as a particular challenge in securing the future for mills. The 2017 report on mills in the North West – *Engines of Prosperity* - provides case studies, guidance and key lessons on converting mills.[12] Precedents for non-traditional windows on mills are discussed in the Lambert Smith Hampton report, including the recent Oldham example where consent was granted for PVCu windows on Manor Mill (Ref LB/342813/19).

The NPPF expects that where harm is likely to be caused, it is minimised. In this application the harm is minimised by using a 9-pane window pattern, a dark colour and maintaining the same reveal depth as before. Historic windows are retained on some key parts of the mill, such as the engine house and office.

5.5 Window options

During pre-application discussions, the local authority recommended that other options be considered, such as repairing the existing timber windows and installing secondary glazing, using high quality timber such as Accoya or metal-frames for new windows. The detailing and quality of design for PVCu windows varies; the local authority suggested scoping out options to obtain the highest quality detailing. Standard PVCu is the local authority's least preferred option.

The local authority recommended that a survey and audit of all the mill windows, should be carried out, to record their condition and style/detail in support of the aplication. This has not yet been undertaken.

The financial implications of different window options, both for initial manufacture and future maintenance, are discussed in the Lambert Smith Hampton report.

[12] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/engines-of-prosperity-new-uses-old-mills/engines-of-prosperity-nw-main-report/

6.0 CONCLUSION

Spotland Bridge New Mill is a Grade II listed building and has high significance as a good example of a cotton mill built in the 1830s as a steam-powered spinning mill, with a later warehouse built in stages from the 1890s. As well as the mill, the site includes a former manager's house, the buildings of the power plant (chimney, boiler house and engine house) and the warehouse to the east; it is an unusually intact group. The window replacement application only relates to Building 1, west mill.

Since the 1980s, Greater Manchester textile mills have been demolished at a rate of 44%. There are now 102 mills in Rochdale, compared with almost 200 in the 1980s, and only four remain in Spotland, of which this is the only listed mill. The mill was found to be 'vulnerable' due to its largely vacant state, during the recent resurvey of mills in Greater Manchester. Enabling the mill to be fully occupied by a viable use is therefore a priority.

The listed buildings are protected by legislation in the 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and policies in the NPPF and Local Plan. The NPPF contains a presumption against causing harm to a designated heritage asset. Enabling a viable use will inevitably entail some change; conservation is about managing change not preventing it. Some change may cause harm, which must be minimised and justified; where harm is 'less than substantial' it should be weighed against public benefits, which include securing the optimum viable use.

Letting space to a mix of business and light industrial uses (B1) appears to be the best use for the mill complex; this will require some changes to ensure the buildings are fully let, but it is important to note that this use avoids radical change to the mill, preserving its robust industrial character (compared with residential use which is not being progressed).

Installing PVCu windows in place of timber windows will be part of a package of works to refurbish the mill for business use; the other proposals are the subject of a separate application. It is intended that supporting information will be provided as part of the window replacement application to show why this window type is justified, compared with other options, on the grounds of long-term viability and capital investment.

It is recognised that PVCu windows will cause slight to moderate harm to the significance of the listed mill and slight harm to the conservation area. The applicant's case is that this harm is justified and is outweighed by the public benefits.

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Appendix 1: List Entry

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

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1268046
Date first listed: 04-Nov-1996
Statutory Address: SPOTLAND BRIDGE NEW MILL, BRIDGEFOLD ROAD

Details

SD 82 SE, 335-0/6/10017

ROCHDALE, BRIDGEFOLD ROAD (West side)

Spotland Bridge (New) Mill

II

Cotton spinning mill, now industrial centre. c1833, early C20 extension. Built for the firm of Joseph Butterworth and Co. Ltd. EXTERIOR: original mill of five storeys and attic, thirteen bays. Red/brown brick, slate roof, gable copings. Square fireproof external stair attached to N end, privy tower and fire escape doors (same size as windows) with cast-iron railed platforms on W side. Blocking course and corner pilasters.

INTERIOR: Two rows of cast-iron columns, with flat bolting faces for line shafting, support massive timber cross-beams and joisted timber floors; roof structure of queen-strut trusses to attic storey lit by roof lights and gable windows. Lower engine house with paired narrow round-arched windows indicating housing for a double-beam engine at S end. Attached to this is the low contemporary boiler house, 2-storey storeroom to rear; tapering octagonal chimney close by. Later additions include a 2-storey office block with 4-pane sash to right of doorway and a sash window with margin lights above, added by the 1870s. 4-storey, 9 x 8 bay added mill to the east: Accrington brick, flat roof, segmental-arched 9-pane windows. Structure of steel beams with cast iron columns and concrete floors with sprinkler tower. Powered by mains electricity. Access from the Edenfield Road is through a gateway with wide wrought-iron gates; the original cobbled road surface survives, as does the revetment wall of massive stone slabs on the west side. Also on the site, facing the road junction, is the mill owner/manager's house: coursed gritstone, stone surrounds to doors and windows, slate roof, no stacks. Two storeys, Two rooms deep, single-storey attached outbuilding at rear. Central recessed half-glazed door with overlight, flanking full-height canted bay windows. Doorway and tall stair window to left of centre, rear. Low retaining wall to forecourt.

HISTORY: the mill was built for spinning course counts of cotton twist. By 1888 it was

powered 17,424 spindles, when the business was taken over by Chas. Whittaker Ltd. Listed as a good example of an early C19 non-fireproof mill, which, with its early C20 addition, shows a typical expansion of the business. (Gurr, Duncan, and Hunt: The Cotton Mills of Oldham: Oldham. 1989-).

development pattern for an early site. The c1833 mill is an example of the increasing width (18m) of buildings as construction methods improved and larger machines became available during the middle years of the century. In this example the width is spanned by- timber beams for a non-fireproof construction which remained usual through the mid C19. The roof structure and roof lights indicate the Use of powered machinery rather than storage on this floor. The double beam engine had 2 cylinders side-by-side working a single flywheel; in this mill one line shaft powered each of 2 rows of spinning throstles on the wide spinning floors, (Williams, 1992). (Williams, M and Farnie, DA: Cotton Mills in Greater Manchester: 1992-: 74,82,83,89).

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