

Agenda Item No. 3(b)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CULTURE
AND TOURISM**

9 August 2018

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

TORR VALE MILL – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek the Cabinet Member's approval for Derbyshire County Council to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with High Peak Borough Council (HPBC), Historic England (HE), Torr Vale Mill Preservation Trust (TVMPT) and Torr Vale Mills Limited, as the owner of Torr Vale Mill.

(2) **Information and Analysis** Torr Vale Mill is included on the Secretary of State's statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest and has a grade II* entry. It is also included on HE's Heritage at Risk Register with a Priority Category: F. Priority Categories range from A to F, with A equating to immediate risk of loss and F being at the lower end of the Priority Category scale, although still of serious concern.

Torr Vale Mill dates from 1790 and is a near-complete example of a multi-phase integrated cotton spinning and weaving factory. The Mill retains extensive evidence for both water and steam-powered phases of manufacture, buildings which represent each stage of the development chronology of the site and examples of both fire-proof and conventional timber-floored construction. It is a compact site situated on a prominent bend of the River Goyt at the Torrs in New Mills. The site is overlooked from the higher ground of New Mills town centre and has a robust presence within the Torrs being situated opposite the Millennium Walkway.

Vehicular access to the site is via Torrvale Road which is an un-adopted public highway to the south of the site and runs into Wirksmoor Road. The roads are fronted by 19th and early 20th century gritstone terraced properties. These roads connect to Albion Road (A6015) which connects, within 600 metres, at its southern end to the A6.

The redevelopment/regeneration of the Torr Vale Mill site has been a long-standing objective of both Derbyshire County Council and HPBC.

The site used to have a Priority Category of B on HE's Heritage at Risk Register, however, the current owner has undertaken work to secure the fabric of the mill complex and has brought some of the buildings on the site back in to use. This has included moving his own business into the main mill building. The Torr Vale Mill site is registered in the ownership of Torr Vale Mills Limited.

Notwithstanding this, and the other works the owner intends to carry out, for which he has Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission, the site still has a number of difficulties. These, not exclusively, include: roofing repairs to the main mill building; access to the upper floors of the mill complex; and ensuring unimpeded vehicle access to the site.

In 2014, TVMPT, in Partnership with Torr Vale Mills Limited, appointed a consultant to undertake a feasibility study/development appraisal of the site which was funded by the Architectural Heritage Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Unfortunately, during the production of the report, communication between the three parties broke down and, while the consultant produced a report with feasible uses, it did not accommodate the owner's existing uses on the site in an acceptable location to the owner. Derbyshire County Council, HPBC and HE were not involved with the commissioning of the report.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has indicated that it would be willing to fund another feasibility study for the Torr Vale Mill Site. However, this is likely to be the last opportunity to secure funding for this activity. For this reason, it is proposed that Derbyshire County Council, HPBC and HE are engaged with the procurement and running of any feasibility/market appraisal to facilitate a successful outcome. To this end, the MoU has been drafted setting out the roles and responsibilities of each of the parties to ensure a good foundation from which to launch the process.

(3) **Financial Considerations** It is not envisaged that Derbyshire County Council will contribute financially to any study for Torr Vale Mills, or will be financially responsible as a result of the proposals in this report.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The Director of Legal Services will advise on the terms of the MoU.

(5) **Human Resources Considerations** The Head of Conservation Heritage and Design will be Derbyshire County Council's lead Officer on the Torr Vale Mill project and will represent the Council at any of the meetings highlighted in the MoU.

(6) **Social Value Considerations** Torr Vale Mill is a prominent and historically important building in New Mills' Torrs and its appropriate redevelopment and repair will significantly contribute to the local environment

which will improve the quality of the public realm for all. Hopefully, this will contribute in promoting pride and care in the environment. The redevelopment scheme is also likely to provide employment opportunities for the local community. The redevelopment scheme may also provide community space for things such as exhibitions.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(7) **Key Decision** No.

(8) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(9) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details - Adam Lathbury, extension 39791.

(10) **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member approves:

- 10.1 Derbyshire County Council entering into the Memorandum of Understanding with High Peak Borough Council, Historic England, Torr Vale Mill Preservation Trust and Torr Vale Mills Limited to help facilitate a successful outcome to a feasibility/market appraisal for the Torr Vale Mill site.
- 10.2 That the Council's input into the final version of the Memorandum of Understanding is undertaken in liaison between the Director of Legal Services and the Strategic Director of Economy, Transport and Environment.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment