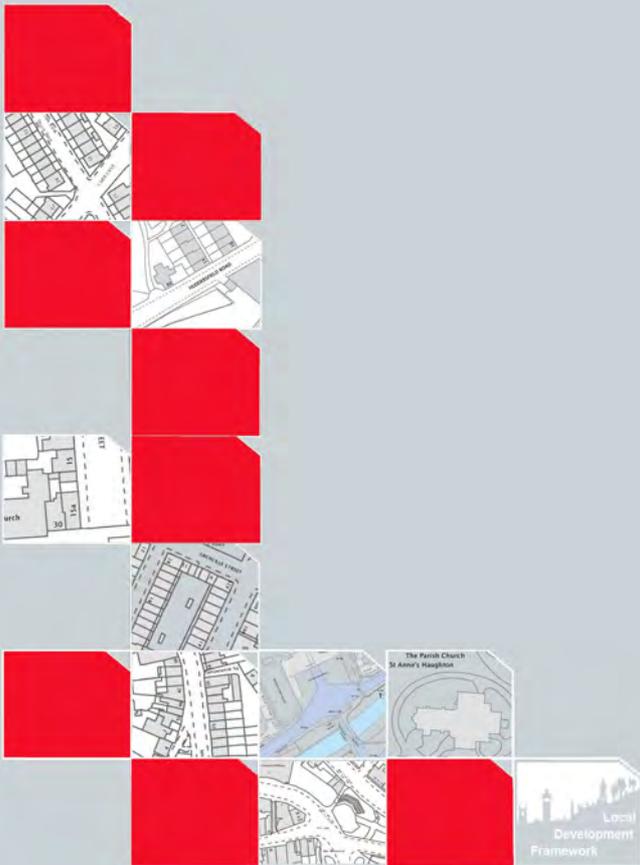

Portland Basin Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals



March 2013



Contents

	Portland Basin Conservation Area Summary	
1	Summary	4
	Portland Basin Conservation Area Appraisal	
2	Introduction	7
3	Definition of Special Character	8
	Location and Setting	8
	Historical Development	10
	General Character and Plan Form	13
	Landscape Setting	14
	Character Statement	14
4	Spatial Analysis	15
	Public Realm	15
	Open Spaces	16
	Views	16
5	Character Analysis	18
	Character Areas	18
	Land Use and Influence on Form	20
	Architectural and Historic Qualities of Buildings and their General Condition	20
	Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area	20
	Contribution of Key Unlisted Buildings	22
	Landscape Contribution	23
6	Threats and Opportunities	24
	Erosion of Character	24
	New Development	24
	Problems, Pressures and Opportunities for Change	24
	Portland Basin Conservation Area Management Proposals	
7	Introduction	26
8	Current and Future Management of the Portland Basin Conservation Area	27
	Boundary Review	27
9	Protection of the Existing Historic Environment	29

	Planning Policy	29
	Buildings at Risk	29
	Enforcement	29
	Minor Changes	29
10	Historic Buildings	30
	Statutory Listed Buildings	30
	Locally Listed Buildings	30
	Unlisted Buildings	30
11	Potential Development Sites	31
	Development Brief	31
12	Trees and Open Spaces	32
	Trees and Open Spaces In and Around Portland Basin	32
13	Enhancement of Portland Basin Conservation Area	33
	Enhancement	33
	Design Principles	33
	Appendices	
14	Appendix 1 Planning Policy Context	36
	National Planning Policy Guidance	36
	Regional Planning Policy	38
	Local Planning Policy Guidance	38
15	Appendix 2 Maps	41
16	Appendix 3 References	44

Portland Basin Conservation Area Summary



1 Summary

1.1 Portland Basin was designated as a Conservation Area in 1991. A conservation area is defined as *'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance* (Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s.69 (1))'.

1.2 Portland Basin lies to the south west of Ashton town centre where the Ashton Canal, Peak Forest Canal and River Tame corridors meet. The Conservation Area is bounded by Victoria Street/Hill Street to the north, Cavendish Street to the east, Alma Street/railway line to the south and Margaret Street to the west.

1.3 The historic development of Portland Basin is associated mainly with rapid economic growth during the 19th century, although a site on the northern bank of the River Tame, close to present day Cavendish Street, was for hundreds of years the location of Ashton Manorial Corn Mill. The industrial development of the area was largely attributed to the canal and rail networks created in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Cotton Mills quickly took advantage of the canal-side locations and lined the northern banks of the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals, whilst iron and steel foundries developed to the south of the area, between the Peak Forest Canal and the railway line.

1.4 During the 19th century cotton, iron and steel industries flourished, by the mid-20th century gradual decline resulted in the closure of cotton mills, foundries as well as the closure of the canal network at Portland Basin. Whilst traditional mill buildings lay derelict in the 1960s and 70s, modern industrial units were being constructed on the cleared sites of 19th century terraced housing to the north of Portland Basin. Although little appeared to have been done to secure the future of the redundant mills, support was gained and work commenced to make the canals navigable once more during the 1970s.

1.5 When the Portland Basin Conservation Area was initially designated in 1991 the area was considered to possess historic and architectural character and interest. Although the main focus of the area centred on the canal basin, the Conservation Area boundary extended to include areas to the north and south with the aim of bringing forward enhancement schemes for their improvement. This included the area to the north of the Ashton Canal, which contained the 1960/70s industrial units and the area to the south of the Peak Forest Canal, dominated by the former 19th century iron and steel foundries and works buildings.

1.6 Since designation in 1991, the Portland Basin Conservation Area has been subject to major regeneration activity which has had a dramatic impact on its 19th century industrial waterside character. This included the clearance of the remaining mill buildings, the rebuilding of the Ashton Canal Warehouse (Portland Basin Museum) and clearance of the remaining 19th century terraced housing on Hill Street. The area once occupied by Dukinfield Mill, Waterside Iron and Steel works and Waterside Mill is now the site of Portland Basin Marina. The cleared sites of Junction Mill, Tudor Mill and Portland Place (including Hill Street) have been redeveloped for new residential accommodation. Funding was also obtained for improvements to the canal towpaths, landscaping and the reintroduction of stone setts around Portland Place.

1.7 The 2013 Appraisal maintains that the combination of the area's natural and man-made features continue to provide Portland Basin with its unique character. The main focus of the Conservation Area continues to be the junction of the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals and the River Tame. The 19th century Junction Mill chimney (all that now remains of Junction Mill) and Cavendish Mill continue to be vital elements in the enclosure of the Ashton Canal to the north. The attractive tree lined tow-path to the south of the Ashton Canal encloses an important view between Cavendish Mill and Junction Mill chimney, which is a prominent landmark feature.

1.8 The area to the south of the Conservation Area between the Peak Forest Canal and rail line was also included within the 1991 boundary with the aim of being improved. This area includes Portland Basin Marina and the remains of industrial foundries and works to the south of the Peak Forest Canal. Although

a number of these 19th century buildings have been altered, their inclusion within the Conservation Area is consistent with the areas 19th century industrial identity.

1.9 The Appraisal indicates that the area to the north of Portland Basin broadly located around Hill Street, Bentinck Street and Portland Street included within the 1991 boundary, is not considered to possess any particular architectural or historic merit. The 1960/70s industrial units and builder's yard, in particular, are considered to be out of character and their general appearance detracts from the setting of the Conservation Area. The triangular area of land between Cavendish Street and the River Tame is also considered to have little remaining historic or architectural merit. The inclusion of these areas within the Conservation Area boundary is considered to be confusing.

1.10 In light of the findings of the Appraisal, a boundary review has been proposed. This review suggests that an area broadly to the north of the Basin, around Hill Street and the triangular area to the east of the Basin adjacent to Cavendish Street should be deleted from the Conservation Area.



View west along Ashton Canal towards Junction Mill Chimney

Portland Basin Conservation Area Appraisal



2 Introduction

2.1 Portland Basin was designated as a Conservation Area in 1991. It remains an important example of the Borough's industrial canal side heritage. Recently published government guidance calls for local planning authorities to make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan making or development management publicly available¹.

2.2 Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council commissioned Taylor Young (supported by Donald Insall Associates) in December 2005 to undertake appraisals of four Conservation Areas including Portland Basin. As this appraisal was never taken forward for public consultation it was considered that the original Taylor Young report should be updated and that the Conservation Area boundaries and recommendations included within the original appraisal be reassessed. This appraisal is therefore based on the report written in March 2006 by Taylor Young and provides an up to date assessment of the Portland Basin Conservation Area. It aims to analyse the built form, historical context and natural setting to define the special interest of the Conservation Area. It identifies key positive and negative impacts, erosion of character, potential threats, and considers the appropriateness of the Conservation Area boundary. It makes recommendations for future policy and action by the Council to preserve or enhance the area's special character.

2.3 The report was undertaken in accordance with English Heritage guidance on conservation area appraisals². The report is based on site analysis and historical research on the character and history of the area.



View towards St. Mark's Church from Welbeck Street South

¹ Department of Communities and Local Government 2012, Para 141

² English Heritage 2005, Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals

3 Definition of Special Character

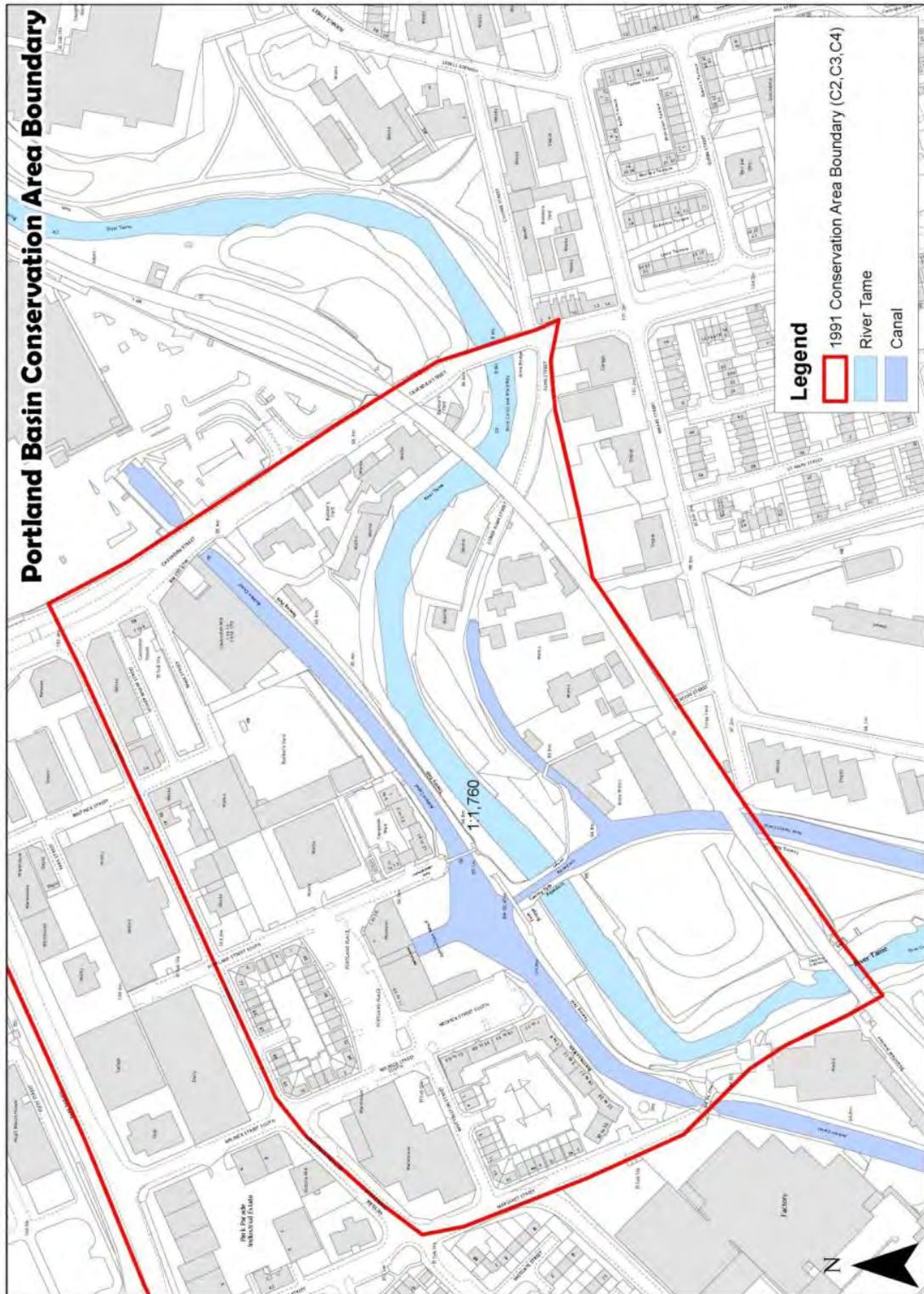
Location and Setting

3.1 Portland Basin lies to the south-west of Ashton Town Centre. The Basin is the place where the Peak Forest and Ashton Canal corridors converge and it is also bisected by the River Tame. This has resulted in an attractive natural corridor and also several historically important structures such as bridges, viaducts and an aqueduct. Large parts of the area are still occupied by employment activities, although the area has recently seen a shift towards tourism and leisure development. Several of the former industrial sites adjacent to Ashton Canal have also been developed for residential use.

3.2 The character of the area is focused around the watercourses, where most of the historic buildings are grouped. Unfortunately this area has been severed from the town centre by Park Parade and to a lesser degree Cavendish Street. It is also effectively surrounded, especially to the north, by 1960s and 70s, industrial units whose design does not reflect the character of the Conservation Area. The result is that the only strong visual link from the historic Basin to the town centre and major radial routes (such as Park Parade) is Junction Mill chimney. The effect of enclosure is that the special character of the Basin is 'hidden' from those that do not know it is here.



The Ashton Canal, Boatmans Walk and Junction Mill Chimney



Portland Basin Conservation Area Boundary (Not to Scale) © Crown copyright 2013. All rights reserved LA100022697

Historical Development

3.3 Industrial development to the south west of Ashton town centre is linked to the construction of the Ashton and Peak Forest Canal's at Portland Basin. Prior to the canals construction the earliest known industrial development in what is now the Portland Basin Conservation Area was Ashton (Manorial Corn) Mill, which '*had been in existence for hundreds of years on a site on the right bank of the River Tame off present day Cavendish Street just to the north of the railway viaduct*³'. By 1786, Ashton Mill was in the ownership of Samuel Swire and contained machinery for both corn milling and cotton spinning. In 1788 a new building was added, for the sole purpose of cotton spinning. The mill had a water wheel and was fed by a goit from the River Tame. In 1852 part of Ashton Mill was rebuilt. It appears that the original corn mill building was still standing during the 1870s but had been cleared by the early 1880s⁴.

3.4 In 1792 a group of shareholders, including the Earl of Stamford and several local land and colliery owners from Ashton, Denton and Oldham put forward a proposal for an Act of Parliament to construct a canal for transporting coal to Manchester. Originally called the Manchester, Ashton under Lyne and Oldham Canal; it was completed c.1797. The Peak Forest and Huddersfield Canals joined the Ashton Canal to provide links to the woollen districts in Yorkshire and limestone quarries in Derbyshire. By about 1798, the lower section of the Peak Forest Canal and Ashton Canal had been connected via the Dukinfield spur across the aqueduct over the Peak Forest Canal at Portland Basin⁵.

3.5 During the 1820s the area to the north of the canal basin was linked to Ashton centre via several newly laid out roads extending southwards from Manchester Road towards the river. These were named, respectively, after the dowager Countess of Stamford (who died in 1827) and her father the Duke of Portland, and their family home Welbeck Abbey (Cavendish Street, Bentinck Street, Portland Street and Welbeck Street)⁶. The grid iron layout of Hill Street, (Higher) Wharf Street and Bank Street had also been established by this time⁷.

3.6 The earliest of the 19th century cotton mills to enclose the northern banks of the Ashton Canal were Richard Standfield's Bankfield Mill in c.1820/21 and Samuel Swire's Bank Mills (Higher and Lower) in c.1823. Ashton Canal Warehouse (now Portland Basin Museum) was constructed in 1834 by David Bellhouse Co. for the Ashton Canal Company. The earliest phase of Samuel Heggibottom's Junction Mill was constructed slightly later, c.1837⁸.

3.7 During the 1840s and early 1850s development to the north of the canal basin continued with the establishment of terraced housing along Margaret Street (South), Victoria Road, Welbeck Street and Whittington Street. A small number of back to back dwellings had been constructed on Headfield Street and Whittington Court. Short blocks of terraced housing had also been constructed along the eastern end of Hill Street, Higher Wharf Street and Bank Street.

3.8 Portland House, on Portland Street was the residence of Samuel Swire in 1841⁹. The house lay within its own private grounds which extended down to the canal to the west of Bank Mills. The building which later became the Portland Hotel in 1891 was located to the north of Portland Place, alongside a bowling green¹⁰. The Beaver Inn, located on the junction of Hill Street and Bentinck Street, had been operating as a beer house during the 1830s and became fully licensed by the 1840s. This was just one of a number of licensed premises in and around Portland Basin during the 19th Century.

³ Haynes, 1987, *Cotton in Ashton*, page 10-11

⁴ Haynes, 1987, *Cotton in Ashton*, page 10-11 and OS Maps 1852, 1874 & 1884

⁵ www.penninewaterways.co.uk and Nevell & Walker 2001, *Portland Basin and the Archaeology of the Canal Warehouse*, page 47-49

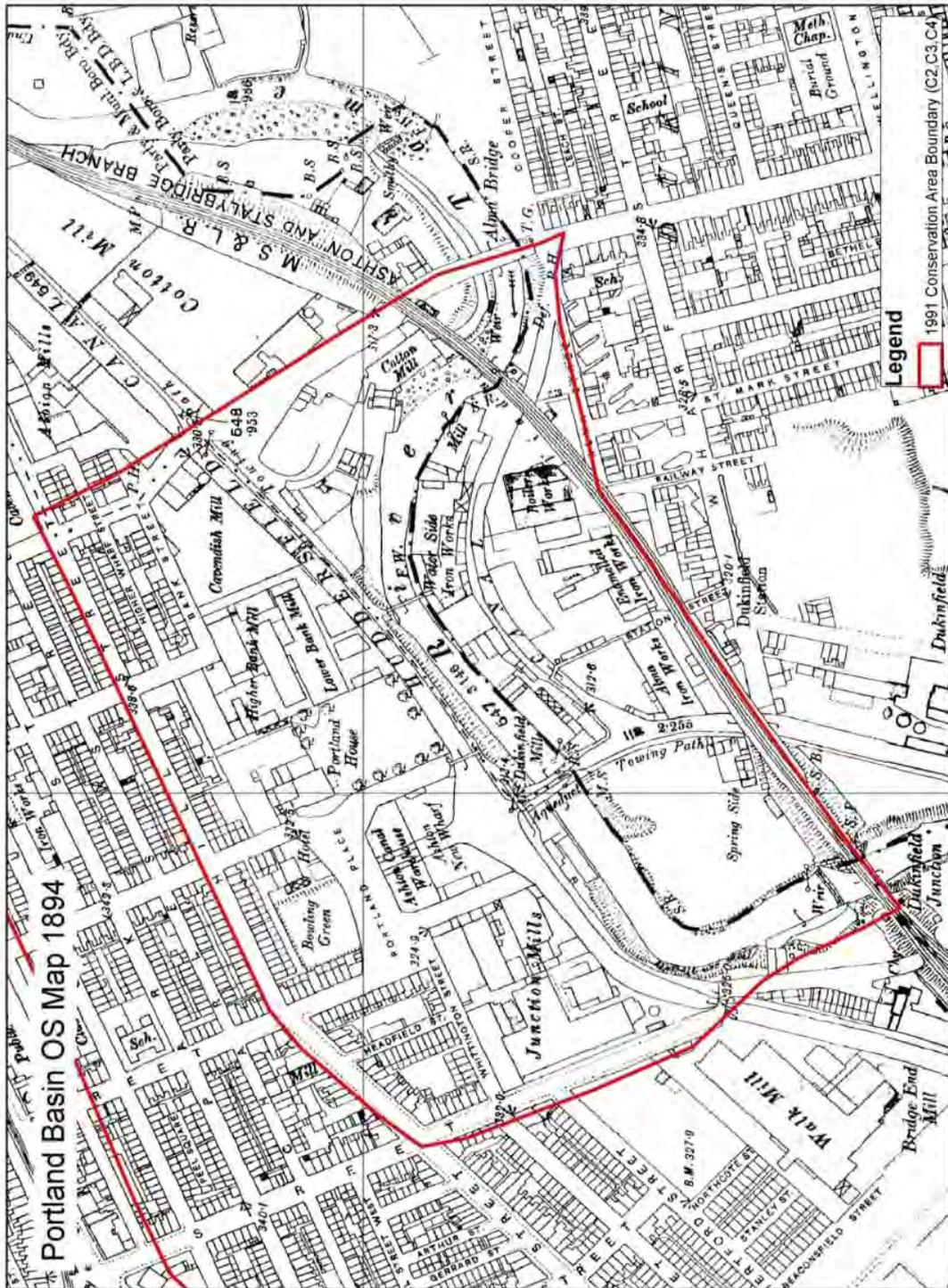
⁶ Bowman 1960, *England in Ashton under Lyne*, page 638

⁷ Haynes 1987, *Cotton in Ashton*, page 40, Earl of Stamford Map dated 1827

⁸ Haynes 1987, *Cotton in Ashton*, pages 24-34 and Nevell & Walker 2001, *Portland Basin and the Archaeology of the Canal Warehouse*, page 14

⁹ 1841 Census

¹⁰ OS Map 1852



1894 OS Map overlaid with the 1991 Portland Basin Conservation Area boundary (not to scale) © and database right 2013 Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd. All rights reserved

3.9 By the mid-19th century the area to the south of the canal basin had been largely developed by industry. In order to connect the various mills and works sites, a number of river and canal bridges were constructed. The Canal Office was situated on the southern bank of the Ashton Canal adjacent to the 1835 footbridge (Bridge No. 28 A) over the Peak Forest Canal. The narrow sliver of land between the River Tame and the Peak Forest Canal contained Dukinfield (cotton) Mill, Waterside Iron Works and Waterside (cotton) Mill. Two wooden footbridges connected this area with the northern bank of the River Tame. A footbridge connect both the northern and southern banks of the Peak Forest Canal and allowed for access into the industrial area bounded by the Peak Forest Canal and the



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Toll Bar Alma Bridge, King Street c.1900

railway line which included a small number of foundries and a timber yard¹¹. This footbridge also connected to a ginnel which linked the Canal Basin to Station Street and Dukinfield Railway Station.

3.10 The most significant bridge to be constructed was the Alma Bridge over the River Tame. This was constructed in 1854 by the Ashton and Dukinfield Bridge Company, taking its name from the Battle of the Alma which had been fought during September of 1854 in the Crimean War. A toll bar was located at the bridge, which marked the boundary between Lancashire and Cheshire, and was in operation until 1902¹².

3.11 Development to the north of the mills on Ashton Canal mainly consisted of dwellings. A brief search into the 1861 Census revealed that the majority of the working population in this area were employed within the cotton textile industry, although a small number of other trades were identified including a painter, provisions dealer, hawker and labourers.

3.12 The OS Map of 1884 illustrates a change in housing types in the northwest corner of the area as the back to back dwellings on Headfield Street and Whittington Court were replaced with new terraced housing. Bankfield Mill ceased trading during the early 1880s and the site was purchased by the Cavendish Spinning Co. Ltd. Cavendish (cotton) Mill was constructed in 1885 in its place. The architects were Potts, Pickup and Dixon of Oldham. Its historical significance lies largely in its early use of concrete floors rather than brick arched floors. By 1897 Lower Bank Mill had permanently closed and shortly afterwards cleared. In 1903 Tudor Mill was erected on the site of Portland House and Stamford Brewery.



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Portland Basin, Tudor Mill and Cavendish Mill in the background

¹¹ OS Map 1852

¹² www.tameside.gov.uk/blueplaques/crimeanwar

3.13 The early years of the 20th century saw decline in both the textile and mining industries which had provided the main trade on the canals in Tameside during the 19th century. No doubt this decline affected Higher Bank Mill, which closed in c.1937. The decline also affected the commercial life of the Ashton, Huddersfield and Peak Forest Canals and, consequently, the Portland Basin Warehouse. After the Second World War there was a rapid closure of the canal network across Tameside. The Huddersfield Canal closed in 1944 and the main Ashton Branch became un-navigable c.1960. By the 1960s all commercial activity had ceased on the canals and Ashton Canal Warehouse lay derelict¹³.

3.14 Further changes to the built environment to the north of the canal basin during the 1960s included the clearance of terraced housing on Higher Wharf Street, Bank Street, Hill Street, Victoria Street, Margaret Street, Whittington Street, Headfield Street and Welbeck Street. Built in their place were modern industrial units and a large builder's yard.

3.15 In 1970 Tudor Mill burnt down. A year later the Canal Warehouse was also devastated by a fire which destroyed much of the building. However in 1971 after a number of years of campaigning a scheme was finally adopted to restore the Ashton Canal between Ashton and Manchester. The Ashton Canal together with the lower section Peak Forest Canal between Marple and the Portland Basin were fully restored to navigation in 1974. Tameside Council acquired the Ashton Canal Warehouse in the early 1980s and, by 1985 had opened the eastern half of the ground floor as a museum, although the rest of the building remained in a ruinous condition¹⁴. By 1987 the majority of Junction Mill was cleared except for the mill chimney and a large part of the earliest spinning block built in 1831-33.

3.16 A major regeneration scheme transformed the Portland Basin area during the 1990s. This included the conversion of Cavendish Mill for residential use, the rebuilding of the Ashton Canal Warehouse, now the home of Portland Basin Museum (which opened again in 1999), the establishment of Portland Basin Marina, the restoration of towpaths and bridges and the reintroduction of stone setts on Portland Place. New residential development on the site of Junction Mill and Tudor Mill and short terraced blocks around Portland Place were built during the early years of the 21st century.



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Portland Wharf and Ashton Canal Warehouse, Portland Basin



Archive image Cavendish Mill (now converted into flats) and R. F. Smith Ltd Potato Merchants

General Character and Plan Form

3.17 The relationship of the two canals, river and railway is the most interesting and distinctive characteristic of the Conservation Area. Their intertwining, overlapping nature provides a series of

¹³ Nevell & Walker 2001, Portland Basin and the Archaeology of the Canal Warehouse, page 59

¹⁴ Nevell & Walker 2001, Portland Basin and the Archaeology of the Canal Warehouse

bridges, aqueducts and viaducts that form key focal points in the many views within the Conservation Area. These bridges are often beautiful structures in their own right and are, in their solidity and mass, a testament to the power and importance of the railways and canals at the time of their construction.

Landscape Setting

3.18 The Conservation Area derives much of its character from the landscape setting. The River Tame valley passes through the area and its banks are home to significant amounts of mature vegetation in a natural state. This is especially true in the bend of the river at the south-west corner of the area, where a large square shaped plateau of park land remains. Interest is provided by the canals which lie at an elevated level across the valley and across the river at the aqueduct.

Character Statement

3.19 Portland Basin tells the story of Ashton's industrial past, with historic mill and industrial buildings of bold design and architectural interest, set amongst a changing river and canal side environment, with both a strong natural setting and excellent historic examples of infrastructure and industrial engineering.



View east across the Ashton Canal and River Tame

4 Spatial Analysis

Public Realm

4.1 The quality of the public realm varies within the Conservation Area. Portland Place is a large public square to the north of Heritage Wharf. This has benefited from improved surveillance from the new housing opposite which address the space well, although the domestic scale does little to enclose this large space. To the east and west the square is still fronted by low-grade industrial units. Although much of this space is used for car parking, this does not dominate the area due to its large size. The square derives most of its character from the use of traditional stone setts, which also extend along adjacent streets. The use of traditional steel posts as bollards works well also. This treatment is extended to the new housing which uses flags of traditional appearance in front of the space.

4.2 The other area of strong public realm is the Ashton Canal towpath, which maintains a continuous pedestrian route adjacent to the south side of the Canal and displays signs of recent investment. The sections of the footpath on the northern side of the canal are well paved with new flags and simple timber railing. Where the footpath passes the new canal side housing to the west, it has steel railings which are painted in a blue colour to match features on Heritage Wharf. These are rather dominant here, and there is a seemingly unnecessary second fence behind. The southern tree-lined towpath is less formal and extends between the canal and the valley of the River Tame. An open green space with seating overlooking the river valley lies adjacent to the southern towpath on the site of the former 19th century canal office.



Stone setts at Portland Place provide an informal parking area around Portland Basin Museum



Public realm works at Boatman's Walk including paving, setts and railings



Open space between the Canal and River was formally the site of the Canal Office

4.3 To the north of the Conservation Area around Hill Street, the public realm is that of a low-grade industrial estate. Signage and lamp standards are functional and inappropriate to a Conservation Area context.

4.4 The sliver of land between the River Tame and the Peak Forest Canal is now the site of Portland Basin Marina. Although all trace of the former 19th century industrial buildings have disappeared, areas of stone setts remain along Alma Street and close to the site of Dukinfield Mill, along with a set of cast iron gate piers.

4.5 The state of the public realm in the area between the Peak Forest Canal and the railway line is also typically low quality for an industrial area. The area is fairly inaccessible from the canal basin apart from the link provided by the pedestrian bridge over the Peak Forest Canal which leads to a ginnel onto Station Street. This corridor has retained its original stone setts.



Ginnel between Station Street and the footbridge over the Peak Forest Canal



Bentinck Street view east towards car park



Footbridge over the Peak Forest Canal and gate piers at the entrance to Portland Basin Marina

Open Spaces

4.6 Open spaces are associated with the river valley. The large area of open space at the south-west corner is the only significant space within the Conservation Area and is accessed via the Peak Forest Canal towpath. Towpaths and footpaths along the canal provide the most significant public amenity space.

4.7 There is a limited amount of semi-private space located within the central courtyard areas of the new developments at Boatman's Walk, Canalside Walk and Portland Place. These areas are used for communal parking and provide a small amount of open grass space.



Landscaped area around the base of Junction Mill Chimney



Communal parking area to the rear of Boatman's Walk, Margaret Street, Welbeck Street South and Whittington Street



Open space between the River Tame and the Peak Forest Canal

Views

4.8 Views and vistas are a critical aspect of Portland Basin Conservation Area. There are a number of key vistas towards buildings and structures both inside and outside of the Conservation Area:

- Westwards along Ashton Canal towards Junction Mill Chimney.
- Eastwards along Ashton Canal and the River towards Cavendish Mill and Albion United Reform Church.
- Eastwards down Hill Street towards the Church of St. Michael and All Angels and Albion United Reform Church.
- Looking east from the towpath near Cavendish Mill, along Ashton Canal, towards the Church of St. Michael and All Angels.
- Southwards along the Peak Forest Canal towards the cast iron railway bridge.

- To the north, glimpses of the Italianate tower of the former Municipal Baths on Stamford Street.
- Views of the facades of Cavendish Mill and number 85 Cavendish Street.
- Views south of Ashton Canal towards St Mark's Church in Dukinfield
- View of the viaduct and Junction Mill Chimney from the open space to the south of the railway line



Railway bridge over the Peak Forest Canal



View north up Portland Street South towards the tower of the former Municipal Baths



Cavendish Mill and 85 Cavendish Street



View West along Ashton Canal towards Junction Mill Chimney



View east along Ashton Canal towards Cavendish Mill and Albion United Reform Church spire in the distance



View west along Hill Street towards Albion United Reform Church and St. Michael's Church

5 Character Analysis

Character Areas

5.1 The Conservation Area contains a mix of 19th and 20th century buildings, ranging from well preserved historic industrial buildings and structures to 1960s and 1970s modern employment unit. The juxtaposition of these building types and variation in quality has made it possible to identify five areas of distinct character:

- The Canal Basin
- Open space south of the river
- Hill Street Industrial Area
- Portland Basin Marina
- 19th Century Industrial Area

5.2 The Canal Basin: This area has at its heart the Heritage Wharf building. Although rebuilt during the 1990s the warehouse plays a significant role in the identity of the area. Portland Basin itself, the elegant hump-backed bridge over the Peak Forest Canal, the aqueduct and the view of Junction Mill Chimney are also integral to the character of the area. This area extends along the Ashton Canal (with the Canal as a linking theme) to include the impressive Cavendish Mill. The recent housing schemes at Boatman's Walk and Canalside Walk are included in this area. Their relationship to historic elements, framing views and enclosing the canal bank to the north is important. The character of the canal basin is also essential in determining the wider character of the Conservation Area.

5.3 The canal basin makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Elsewhere the contribution is less clear. The mixed use triangular area adjacent to Cavendish Street is considered to have a negative impact on the character and setting of the Conservation Area. The little that remains of the 19th century mill buildings on this site is well hidden and inaccessible. The late 20th century units adjacent to Cavendish Street appear out of context with the historic built environment within the Basin, particularly the Grade II* listed Cavendish Mill.

5.4 Open space south of the river: There is a second area of positive character that centres on the River Tame. At the western end of the Conservation Area this is an attractive area of significant mature vegetation and an appealing view, which encompasses the Ashton Canal and River (which is at a different level to the Peak Forest Canal). The feel of this area is much more rural and focuses on the watercourses and associated structures rather than industrial buildings.



Canal Basin



Mixed use area adjacent to Cavendish Street



Open space south of the River

5.5 Hill Street Industrial Area: This area is bounded by Hill Street, Portland Street South and Cavendish Street. The area contains a wide mix of buildings including a small grouping of 19th Century buildings comprising the 1872 former Britannia Brass Works and 39-41 Hill Street (the last remaining Victorian terraced houses in the Conservation Area), located around the junction of Hill Street and

Bentinck Street. These buildings would benefit from sensitive improvements to external finishes. The (former) Beaver Inn, located on the junction of Hill Street and Bentinck Street received conservation area consent for demolition in 2011 and was subsequently cleared in 2012. Elsewhere in this character area most of the buildings are of 20th century origin and are of conflicting design including 1960/70s industrial units and a builder's yard situated on the sites of mid-19th century terraced housing. Although the 19th century grain of the area has been retained, the 20th century industrial units are a sharp contrast in terms of design and materials to the older industrial buildings and structures associated with the canal basin. This contrast has resulted in a negative impact on the wider setting of the Conservation Area.



Hill Street industrial area



Former Beaver Inn, 14 Bentinck Street – demolished 2012



Former Britannia Brass Works and 39-41 Hill Street

5.6 Portland Basin Marina: The Marina has developed on a narrow, linear stretch of land between the River Tame and the Peak Forest Canal. The areas current use as a marina fits naturally with its canal side location. This area is considered to have a neutral effect on the character of the Conservation Area.

5.7 19th Century Industrial Area: Industrial works buildings developed within an area bounded by the Peak Forest Canal and railway line during the 19th century. Negative elements within this area include a small number of the buildings of modern design, whilst older buildings have been subject to uncharacteristic alterations to their external appearances. Although areas of original stone setts remain, frontages are generally untidy. There is, however, one historic industrial building of interest here – the 'J. Bown' building. This building appears to be all that remains of a late 19th century iron and steel boiler works. The early 19th century footbridge and ginnel, which would have once linked the Basin to Dukinfield Railway Station, is also of interest. The retention of these buildings and their original layout have helped to preserved the 19th century industrial canal side character of the Conservation Area.



Portland Basin Marina



19th century J. Bown works building



19th century industrial area

Land Use and Influence on Form

5.8 At present, the area is a mix of uses that do not always work well together. Residential and tourism/leisure uses sit alongside active employment uses, which are generally not of an appropriate scale and massing. Older historic buildings (such as Cavendish Mill and the former Ashton Canal Warehouse) have been successfully adapted (or rebuilt) to accommodate these new uses. New residential development has managed to meet modern accommodation requirements whilst being in style that is sympathetic with the older context. Other historic industrial buildings, particularly those to the south of the Peak Forest Canal, are still in lower value employment use and consequently their condition and appearance has deteriorated. The newer industrial units to the north of Ashton Canal have been built on the site of 19th century terraced housing without regard to historical or architectural context and this now compromises both the character of the Conservation Area and residential amenity.



Apartment block Welbeck Street South

Architectural and Historic Qualities of Buildings and their General Condition

5.9 The condition of the Conservation Area is currently finely balanced. On the surface, there appears to be little left of the built historic fabric apart from the structures associated with the canals, Junction Mill Chimney and Cavendish Mill. This very perception endangers the other buildings that contribute to the Conservation Area in a smaller, but nonetheless important way, and have a great deal more potential if the right investment was sourced. Whilst it is important to get new uses and sources of income into the site, it would be short sighted to wipe away the real essence of its character – its industrial past. Avoiding further wholesale clearance and redevelopment by repairing and reusing the older buildings, and retaining the brick structures to the south of the river, may restrict redevelopment at the outset, but in the long-term will secure the survival of the industrial character and grain of the Conservation Area.

5.10 The urban grain is very important to the character of the northern part of the Conservation Area. New developments should make reference to the blocks on the old Ordnance Survey maps to try and re-establish lost street patterns.

Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

5.11 There are a number of historic buildings, bridges and structures within the Conservation Area which are listed. They include:

- Grade II* Cavendish Mill – built in 1885
- Grade II Aqueduct over the River Tame- built in 1797
- Grade II Bridge No. 28 A (over Peak Forest Canal) - built in 1835
- Grade II Park Parade Railway Viaduct (eastern crossing of River Tame) - built in c.1845
- Grade II Park Parade Railway Viaduct (western crossing of River Tame) - built in c.1845

5.12 Cavendish Mill: The character of traditional buildings and structures is very much one of solidity and weight with a mixture of stone and brick being used throughout. Without doubt the most significant

listed building in the area is the Grade II* listed Cavendish Mill. This mill was built on the site of Bankfield Mill in 1884-5 and has an unusual plan form. It is built of brick with steel girders resting on steel window lintels with concrete floors and a flat roof. The main block is 6 storeys to the canal and 5 storeys to Bank Street and there is a short extension to the north-east which would have incorporated the engine house. An octagonal stair turret is attached to the south-east face of the mill. A small entrance courtyard faces Cavendish Street which is enclosed to the south by a two story office block. Windows are large with 9-panes set under blue brick lintel bands and continuous projecting sill bands. The building, which was converted into flats during the 1990s, dominates views across the Conservation Area.

5.13 Bridge No. 28 A: This is a towpath bridge over the Peak Forest Canal at the junction with the Ashton Canal. It was constructed in 1835 of hammer-dressed stone and laid with stone setts. Parapet walls are made of large monolithic slabs above a continuous band. A segmental arch and gentle incline forms a functional yet graceful form. To the east of the towpath bridge is a 1950s steel footbridge which replaced an original timber footbridge built by Isaac Watt Boulton in 1843¹⁵.

5.14 Aqueduct over River Tame: Designed and built by Benjamin Outram and Thomas Brown in c.1797¹⁶. The aqueduct is constructed of ashlar and dressed stone with arches in engineering brick. There are 3 elliptical arches and 2 stone bands. Parapet walls are curved in plan and have square terminating piers.



Bridge Number 28 A



Peak Forest Canal Aqueduct



Cavendish Mill

5.15 Park Parade Railway Viaduct (eastern crossing of River Tame) – Built in 1845 for the Oldham, Ashton under Lyne and Guide Bridge Junction Railway. The viaduct is built of rock-faced stone and has 7 arches spanning the River and Lower Alma Street. The segmental arches have rusticated voussoirs and keystones and are supported on square piers. The parapet wall has an ashlar band and coping.

5.16 Park Parade Railway Viaduct (western crossing of River Tame) – This is constructed of rock-faced stone and brick and comprises 3 segmental arches. Each arch is supported on a square pier. The brick parapet has an ashlar band and coping and square terminating piers.

¹⁵ Nevell & Walker 2001, Portland Basin and the archaeology of the canal warehouse, page 54

¹⁶ Nevell & Walker 2001, Portland Basin and the archaeology of the canal warehouse, page 54



One of the seven arches which form the Park Parade Viaduct (eastern crossing)



Park Parade Viaduct (western crossing)

Contribution of Key Unlisted Buildings

5.17 Junction Mill Chimney: The octagonal 210 feet high Chimney was built between the Ashton Canal and Junction Mills Banquet Mill engine house in 1867¹⁷. It is now the last remaining featured associated with Junction Mill and an important landmark structure both within the Conservation Area and on the Ashton skyline. Junction Mill ceased spinning and weaving during the 1930s and the mill buildings were cleared in sections during the 20th century with the 1831-33 spinning block being the last to be demolished during the 1990s. The repairs to the chimney were carried out by a team led by Groundwork Tameside in 2000 and a small landscaping project was carried out to form a public area at its base. The chimney is of elegant proportions and has a herringbone brick detail band near its base, several further banding details at intervals up its height with terracotta detailing and crenellations at the top



Junction Mill Chimney

5.18 Former Ashton Canal Warehouse (Heritage Wharf): Although this building has little or no remaining historic fabric and the rebuilt elevations are not to the same detail or materials as the original, this building is nonetheless an important landmark and visual reminder of what was previously there. The building forms an attractive focal point at the joining point of the two canals.

5.19 85 Cavendish Street: This building was constructed by c.1880 and lies directly north of Cavendish Mill on Cavendish Street. In 1894¹⁸ it was used for the manufacture of reeds and healds which are '*components of a textile loom with related functions, in that they control the threads, and similar wire based construction*'¹⁹. The building is of three storeys and has been constructed from red brick with a slate roof and attractive ashlar dressings around the windows and main entrance. Wooden loading doors remain in situ on side elevations and mock sash timber windows have helped to retain much of the buildings original character. Today number 85 has been converted to offices and flats and forms an attractive group of late 19th century industrial buildings alongside Cavendish Mill.

¹⁷ Haynes 1987, Cotton in Ashton, page 34, 1987

¹⁸ OS Map 1894

¹⁹ <http://thesaurus.english-heritage.org.uk>

5.20 Alma Bridge: The Bridge was built over the River Tame in 1854 by the Ashton and Dukinfield Bridge Company to link Cavendish Street in Ashton to King Street in Dukinfield. A blue plaque on the bridge commemorates those soldiers from the Ashton area who were killed during that conflict. As such it represents an important part of the town's history and is marked with a blue heritage plaque²⁰.



Former Ashton Canal Warehouse



85 Cavendish Street former reed and head works



The Alma Bridge

Landscape Contribution

5.21 The landscape in the area around the canal junction and the River Tame plays a major contribution to character. As described previously, this consists of the river valley, mature vegetation and the Canal crossing this valley. The overall contribution is of a natural environment inhabited with significant engineering features.

5.22 The area between Cavendish Street and Portland Street South to the north of the Ashton Canal has a somewhat different feel. This is a man-made environment and there is little landscape contribution as the 19th century gridiron layout did not allow for open space, trees and gardens. Industrial units, both old and new, have very little landscaping associated with them and the feel is very much urban and industrial. At the Ashton Canal there is some semi-formal vegetation at the canal edge and the mature vegetation in the river valley is visible. The feel here is of the urban environment meeting the natural environment in a harmonious manner.



Industrial landscape at Portland Street South



View west across the River Tame towards Junction Mill Chimney

²⁰ www.tameside.gov.uk/blueplaues/crimeanwar

6 Threats and Opportunities

Erosion of Character

6.1 Erosion of character has resulted from lack of investment into parts of the area and some inappropriate and uncharacteristic development.

New Development

6.2 New residential developments have been constructed on the cleared sites of 19th century terraced housing and mill buildings to the north of Ashton Canal. Although of little architectural merit themselves there has been some attempt in the Boatman and Canalside developments to utilise the foot prints of both the former Tudor and Junction Mill buildings in order to keep the 19th century gain of the area.



Modern residential development at Portland Basin

Problems, Pressures and Opportunities for Change

6.3 Major problems include the continued existence of low grade modern industrial units of inappropriate design, while historic industrial buildings remain in poor condition. Whilst it is important that any new development is built to an appropriate design in order to reflect the character of the Conservation Area, it is difficult to apply planning controls on continuing uses such as these. An anomaly may be created where new residential development is subject to strict design controls, but these developments may be in close proximity to employment uses in buildings of poor and inappropriate appearance. However, one must recognise that these units are providing jobs; in most cases the buildings predate the designation of the Conservation Area; and the use does at least reflect the historic industrial role of this area.

6.4 Whilst the replacement of original buildings has largely formed a break with the past and the loss of the original character, there remains enough character in these areas (derived from their adjacency to historic buildings) for them to be worth preserving. Given the recent residential developments and investment in Heritage Wharf and Cavendish Mill and the comparative land values for residential as opposed to employment use it is reasonable to assume that these sites may come under pressure for residential redevelopment or refurbishment in the future. Other uses, such as tourism/leisure or studio-based employment or offices would also be suitable in this context although these may be less attractive to the market. It is important now that the Council prepares clear Development Briefs for these sites to establish a suitable range of uses and appropriate design guidance. The example of Heritage Wharf and Cavendish Mill shows that this change of use may be the best way to secure a long term and viable route to preserve the character of the Conservation Area.

6.5 Opportunities should be sought to enhance the pedestrian experience within the Conservation Area and to improve the physical links between the canal basin and Ashton town centre.

6.6 Graffiti is a potential issue in Portland Basin in that its use detracts from the character and appearance of historic buildings, structures and the wider conservation area. Its removal can be a drain on resources and may cause irreversible damage to the surface of historic buildings and structures over a period of time. The removal of graffiti should be undertaken using techniques that do not cause damage to the historic fabric.

Portland Basin Conservation Area Management Proposals



7 Introduction

7.1 The purpose of the Management Proposals are to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Portland Basin Conservation Area, whilst managing change without compromising the historic environment.

7.2 Despite their historic development conservation areas such as Portland Basin will continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of those individuals who live and work within them. Designating a conservation area does not mean a prohibition on development, but it does mean carefully managing change which ensures that the character and appearance of these areas are safeguarded and enhanced for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations.

7.3 The Management Proposals aim to fulfil section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which states that it is the duty of a local planning authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas. The Management Proposals are also intended to complement existing national and local policies including Section 12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework²¹, Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas²² and the saved policies in the adopted (2004) Tameside Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The UDP sets the local planning framework for conservation and enhancement of the historic built and natural environment within the Borough.

7.4 These Management Proposals are to be read in conjunction with the Portland Basin Conservation Area Appraisal. The Appraisal outlines the historic development of Portland Basin and defines the special character and appearance of both the historic built and natural environments within the Conservation Area. The Management Proposals have developed out of the findings of the Appraisal and both will be useful supporting documents for Tameside's forthcoming Local Development Framework. It will also provide guidance for development proposals within and adjacent to the Portland Basin Conservation Area. It is hoped that the Portland Basin Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals will act as a reference for all who make decisions which may impact on the special character of Portland Basin, including property owners, planners, developers, architects and the local authority.

7.5 The Management Proposals set out policies on protecting the character and historic interest of the Portland Basin Conservation Area. They provide design principles to act as a framework for future development within Portland Basin.

²¹ Department of Communities and Local Government 2012

²² English Heritage, 2006

8 Current and Future Management of the Portland Basin Conservation Area

Boundary Review

8.1 Every local planning authority has a duty placed upon them to consider from time to time whether it should designate new conservation areas or extend existing ones (Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 69).

8.2 Although the Portland Basin Conservation Area follows legible boundaries, its integrity is compromised by the inclusion of late 20th /early 21st century development and a small number of inappropriate and much-altered 19th century buildings. In light of this it is recommended that the Conservation Area boundary be reviewed. By reviewing the boundary the Conservation Area will include and protect only those parts which are considered to be of positive architectural and historic merit or that contribute positively to the wider setting.

8.3 The canal basin, Heritage Wharf, associated features and bridges together with the strong visual links between Junction Mill Chimney and Cavendish Mill along the Ashton Canal, form the central character and historic interest within this Conservation Area. It is therefore recommended that the boundary of the Conservation Area be redrawn to exclude negative areas to the north and east of the existing boundary in order to focus on the historic core.

8.4 **It is recommended that the following areas be removed from the existing Conservation Area boundary:**

- **Triangular area of land located to the south east of the Ashton Canal between Cavendish Street and the northern bank of the River Tame.**
- **Area to the north of Ashton Canal, generally fronting Margaret Street, Hill Street and Cavendish Street.**

8.5 The surviving 19th century mill buildings, within the triangular area of land between the Ashton Canal and River Tame appear to have undergone modern alterations including reroofing and cladding, which has led to the loss of some historic fabric. These buildings have been enclosed by more modern 20th century developments on Cavendish Street, which bear little relation in terms of design and materials to the remaining 19th century buildings within the Portland Basin. Their inclusion within the Conservation Area is therefore confusing.

8.6 The Council has recognised the potential for change in this area through its adopted 2004 UDP Development Opportunity Area E2 (2) allocation. In principle the Council will support schemes in this area which will create higher levels or quality of employment, leisure, retail or residential provision and bring about significant improvements in overall appearance. This allocation is intended to maximise the use and appearance of this area. The general improvement and redevelopment of the area will be considered against Policy E2 (2) as part of the development control process, as and when future development proposals come forward. Given the area's current UDP allocation, the loss of historic fabric and the modern 20th century developments, it is recommended that this area be excluded from the Conservation Area.



19th century works building to the south of the Ashton Canal



Cavendish Street: various works buildings



Cavendish Street: works buildings to the north of railway bridge

8.7 During the 1960s/70s the area to the north of the mills on Ashton Canal was subject to mass clearance of 19th century terraced housing and redevelopment for modern industrial units. Regeneration activity during the late 1990s/early 2000 also saw the development of new residential accommodation to the north of the canal on the cleared sites of 19th century mills and terraced housing. Despite the loss of historic fabric the area was included within the 1991 Conservation Area Boundary with the aim to see it improved. The Council has further recognised the potential for change in part of this area through its adopted 2004 UDP allocation Development Opportunity Area E2 (2). The allocation would, in principle support schemes which will create higher levels or quality of employment, leisure, retail or residential provision and bring about significant improvements in overall appearance.

8.8 The mid/late 20th century works buildings are considered to be inappropriate for inclusion within the Conservation Area. Their general design and appearance are inconsistent with the remaining 19th century industrial developments and detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

8.9 The modern terraced properties built to the north of Portland Place are also considered to be inappropriate for inclusion within the Conservation Area. Their general design, layout and appearance are inconsistent with the character and appearance of the 19th century terraced blocks they have replaced.

8.10 Numbers 39-41 Hill Street represent the only surviving 19th century terraced housing within the existing Conservation Area. To the west of numbers 39 and 41 are much altered 19th century, single story works buildings, and to the east of numbers 39 and 41 lies the former Britannia Brass Works (built in 1872) which together form the remaining cluster of 19th century development on Hill Street. However their altered appearance and general condition, suggest that their inclusion within the Conservation Area is unjustifiable.

8.11 It is recommended that the Conservation Area boundary to the north of Portland Place be amended to exclude the remaining altered 19th century buildings, 20th century works buildings and early 21st century terraced housing on Hill Street, Victoria Road, Welbeck Street South, Portland Street South, Bentinck Street and Bank Street.



Hill Street: vehicle repair garage and cafe



Works buildings on Bentinck Street



View west along Hill Street illustrating 20th century industrial units and early 21st century residential development

9 Protection of the Existing Historic Environment

Planning Policy

9.1 Saved policies on listed buildings and conservation areas within Tameside's adopted (2004) Unitary Development Plan will continue to provide a planning policy basis on which to determine Planning, Conservation Area and Listed Building Consent applications.

Buildings at Risk

9.2 Tameside Council maintains a Register of Building at Risk. This register identifies listed buildings within the Borough which are considered to be at risk from serious neglect and/or decay. At present there are no listed buildings within the Portland Basin Conservation Area which have been identified as being at 'Extreme Risk', 'Grave Risk', or 'At Risk' on this Register.

9.3 It is a recommendation that the Tameside Buildings at Risk Register be updated.

Enforcement

9.4 Keeping historic buildings in use and in good repair is the key to their preservation. When an owner of a listed building or an unlisted building within a conservation area allows their building to fall into serious decay, the local planning authority has statutory powers to take action to instigate their repair with an Urgent Works Notice under Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 or a Repairs Notice under Section 48 of the same Act.

9.5 In the first instance, the Council would always seek to negotiate appropriate repairs with the owner of the building. Where negotiations fail, the Council may decide to serve an Urgent Works Notice on the unoccupied parts of either a listed building or an unlisted building within the Conservation Area in order to execute any works urgently necessary for the building's preservation.

9.6 A Repairs Notice may be served by the Council on the owners of statutory listed buildings within the Conservation Area requiring works that are reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building, should one fall into serious neglect or decay in the future.

9.7 The provisions of a Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is an additional power available to local authorities, to be used either on its own or as part of a package of measures, to improve the amenity of the public realm. A Section 215 Notice can be served on the owner/occupier when the poor condition and the appearance of a property or land are detrimental to the surrounding area or neighbourhood. A Section 215 Notice requires the owner/ occupier to properly maintain the property or land in question, and specify what steps are required to remedy the problem within a specific time period.

Minor Changes

9.8 The original character of the Conservation Area was defined by the interrelationship between the 19th century mills, foundries and associated structures which once lined the banks of the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals and the River Tame. Since designation the vast majority of the Conservation Area to the north of the Ashton Canal has undergone major redevelopment and regeneration works. The result is that little now remains of the area's 19th century industrial heritage. Modern 20th and early 21st century developments bear little resemblance to the buildings and features that they have replaced.

9.9 To the south of the Peak Forest Canal is an industrial area which is bounded by a railway line. This area, too, has continued to evolve since the early 19th century. A number of uncharacteristic alterations have been made to the buildings; most notably original slate roofs have been replaced with corrugated sheet metal. However, unlike the area to the north of the Ashton Canal, this area appears to have retained its original layout, sections of stone setts and a number of 19th century buildings.

10 Historic Buildings

Statutory Listed Buildings

10.1 There are a small number of listed buildings located within the Conservation Area, these are:

- Cavendish Mill, Cavendish Street, Grade II*
- Aqueduct over the River Tame (A-u-L), Peak Forest Canal, Grade II
- Bridge No. 28 A Peak Forest Canal, Grade II
- Park Parade Railway Viaduct, eastern crossing of the River Tame, Grade II
- Park Parade Railway Viaduct, western crossing of the River Tame, Grade II

10.2 The demolition and alteration of these buildings is controlled by the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and policies C5 Alternative Uses, Alterations and Additions for Listed Buildings, C6 Setting of Listed Buildings and C8 Demolition of Listed Buildings within the adopted (2004) Tameside UDP.

Locally Listed Buildings

10.3 Some local authorities have a local list of buildings containing buildings, structures or features which, whilst not statutorily listed, the planning authority feels to be an important part of an area's heritage, due to its architectural, historic, archaeological or artistic interest. Locally listed buildings can often be major contributors to the character and appearance of an area and some can be important local landmarks. Compiling a Local List is a way in which this contribution and merit can be recognised.

10.4 Tameside MBC has now begun to develop a Borough-wide Local List. This will be based on site survey and analysis in conjunction with local heritage groups. It is also envisaged that future policy will be developed to safeguard a locally listed building in relation to any future development, including alterations and extensions to it, having special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

10.5 The following buildings are considered to be strong candidates for inclusion on a local list (See Appendix 2 Maps):

- Junction Mill Chimney, Margaret Street
- Number 85 Cavendish Street
- The Alma Bridge, Cavendish Street

Unlisted Buildings

10.6 Demolition of unlisted buildings within the Portland Basin Conservation Area is subject to policy C3 in the adopted (2004) Tameside UDP.

11 Potential Development Sites

11.1 Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent may be needed for new development, alterations, additions and demolitions within the Portland Basin Conservation Area.

Development Brief

11.2 The area between the Peak Forest Canal and railway line to the south of the Conservation Area may come under pressure in the future for redevelopment. The Council has recognised the potential for change in this area through its adopted 2004 UDP allocation Development Opportunity Area E2 (2). The allocation would, in principle, support schemes which will create higher levels or quality of employment, leisure, retail or residential provision and bring about significant improvements in overall appearance. This allocation is intended to maximise the use and appearance of this area and, in particular, that the canal/riverside setting and visitor attraction offer potential for further redevelopment sites within the area including expansion of marina facilities on the Dukinfield side.

11.3 It would be appropriate to prepare a planning and development brief for this area given the factors above and the area's sensitive location adjacent to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Site of Biological Importance (Huddersfield Narrow Canal SSSI and the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals). The Brief should take into consideration the appropriate balance of uses and the form of the development which would be appropriate for this location, taking into account all relevant planning policies and constraints.



View from Cavendish Mill towards Wharf Street

12 Trees and Open Spaces

12.1 Conservation Area designation automatically protects all trees with a trunk diameter of 75mm or over (or 100 mm for thinning operations) from pruning and felling, with certain exemptions. Under section 211 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 anyone proposing to cut down a tree in a Conservation Area is required to give six weeks prior notice in order to give the local planning authority (LPA) an opportunity to consider whether a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) should be made in respect of the tree.

12.2 There are currently no trees within the existing Conservation Area which have the added protection of a TPO. The purpose of a TPO is to protect trees for the public amenity benefit. A TPO is an order made by a LPA in respect of trees or woodlands. The principal effect of a TPO is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage, or wilful destruction of trees without the local planning authority's consent. The cutting of roots is potentially damaging and so, in the Secretary of State's view, requires consent (www.communities.gov.uk). If the owner of a tree with a TPO wished to undertake any work to that tree they must get permission from the local planning authority first

Trees and Open Spaces In and Around Portland Basin

12.3 The combination of both natural and manmade features gives Portland Basin its unique industrial landscape and setting. Of particular importance are the trees and green spaces adjacent to the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals and the River Tame.

12.4 The wooded valley of the River Tame and the green space to the south west of the Conservation Area, between the River and the Peak Forest Canal is allocated as Protected Green Space within the adopted 2004 UDP. These areas are subject to UDP Policy OL4 which safeguards protected green space from built development.

12.5 The wooded valley and green space play an important role in softening the built environment whilst framing views and providing an attractive setting to the historic industrial buildings and features within the Conservation Area. The green space also performs a valuable role in providing informal recreational space, footpaths including the Peak Forest Canal towpath and a wildlife corridor.



Open space between the Peak Forest Canal and River Tame

12.6 Trees and green space should continue to play a significant role in the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Development of open space and removal of trees should be resisted, although it is acknowledged that selective vegetation management may be required in some instances.

12.7 It is recommended that a tree survey be undertaken particularly in those areas recommend for exclusion from the conservation area boundary, in order to identify any individual or groups of trees which would merit protection through a TPO as and when resources allow.

13 Enhancement of Portland Basin Conservation Area

Enhancement

13.1 Whilst it is the local planning authority's responsibility to preserve the historic environment it is also a requirement to recommend policies that will lead to its enhancement. English Heritage (p21, 2006) have described 'enhancement' within conservation areas as having two principal forms:

- *'The sympathetic redevelopment of sites defined in the detailed appraisal of the area as detracting from the character and appearance of the area, or*
- *Proactive proposals, such as management and repair of a designed historic landscape, a scheme for the restoration of distinctive architectural features and traditional shop fronts, the reinstatement of historic surfaces, or the reduction of traffic intrusion and the rationalisation of street signage'.*

13.2 These enhancement principles, together with the findings of the Portland Basin Conservation Area Appraisal and the saved Tameside UDP policies, have led to the development of a number of design principles for use within the Portland Basin Conservation Area Management Plan.

Design Principles

13.3 The following Design Principles have been developed from the findings of the Portland Basin Conservation Area Appraisal

Traditional Buildings

Statutory listed buildings should be retained, sympathetically restored and reused in recognition of their historic, architectural and townscape qualities. Locally listed buildings are major contributors to the character of the Conservation Area. It is recommended that the Council will, as far as possible, resist the loss of any building which is proposed to be included within the developing Local List.

Alterations and extensions to a locally listed building or development affecting their setting should be designed with particular care. These buildings should be retained, sympathetically restored and enhanced. Empty or underutilised buildings within the Conservation Area should be sympathetically restored and reused.

Sympathetic, Contextual Design

Any new and/or infill development within or adjacent to the Portland Basin Conservation Area must respect the scale, height, massing, alignment and traditional materials used within the Conservation Area. The Council will insist on high quality schemes which respond positively to the character and setting of the Conservation Area, canals and riverside.

Extensions and alterations to an existing building should be designed to enhance the building. Traditional building material and styles typically found within the building and/or Conservation Area should be incorporated into the overall design.

The predominant building material used in the remaining 19th century industrial buildings is red brick. Other features including bridges and viaducts have been constructed of local stone. The use of these materials is integral to the areas character and appearance; therefore exterior rendering of walls and

painting of masonry should be avoided.

A Design and Access Statement will be expected to accompany any future planning application affecting a heritage asset. Applicants will be required to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting in order to justify design decisions, development proposals and/or alterations.

Demolition

If approval for demolition is granted by the local planning authority, materials and features of interest, such as name and date stones salvaged from the cleared site, should be incorporated into new development where appropriate.

Repairs & Maintenance

Regular maintenance of historic buildings will avoid future costly repairs which may be required to rescue buildings from significant deterioration and possible dereliction.

When undertaking maintenance and repair to buildings within the conservation area regard should be had to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the buildings and the need to make a positive contribution to the context in which they are set. Original material such as red brick, local stone and Welsh slate should be retained and reused. Where the reuse of original materials is not possible, new material should be sourced to match the original. Traditional construction and repair techniques should be employed.

The presence of unsympathetic replacement windows and doors within traditional buildings detracts from the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Attempts should be made to repair traditional windows and doors in order to conserve the original design and fabric of the buildings and thereby conserve the historic character of the Conservation Area. Timber window frames and doors should be painted rather than stained. Replacement windows and doors should follow traditional design, using traditional materials and should be set back from the reveal.

Chimney stacks and their pots should be retained where ever possible. Repairs should be carried out in matching natural stone or brick where appropriate.

Urban Grain & Traditional Street Patterns

The urban grain and traditional street patterns are particularly important to the character and appearance of Conservation Area particularly to the north of the Canal Basin where a grid iron pattern of streets once connected it to the town centre. The urban grain within the industrial area south of the Peak Forest Canal is less defined.

As the urban grain is very important to the character of the area, new development should make reference to the block layouts on historic ordinance survey maps to re-establish previous street patterns. If redevelopment takes place in the future, traditional street names should be retained.

Street Furniture

The combined impact of street furniture including benches, road signs, lighting columns, litter bins and road markings, can produce a cluttered appearance within a Conservation Area. Street furniture should only be introduced where necessary and should be sympathetic to local context.

Views

Significant views within and out of the Conservation Area, particularly to and from Junction Mill Chimney, churches and other listed buildings, should be safeguarded.

14 Appendix 1 Planning Policy Context

14.1 This section sets out a summary of the current planning policy that relates to the Conservation Area. This will be considered when recommending proposals for future management.

National Planning Policy

14.2 National Planning Policy Framework: The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on the 27th March 2012 following consultation on the draft document in 2011. The NPPF is a single framework which replaces all Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements with the exception of a separate planning policy for traveller sites, a National Waste Management Plan for England and technical guide on flood risk and minerals.

14.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practise for the planning system and outlines the 12 core land use planning principles that should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations' is one of these core principles (Para 17).

14.4 Policies set out in this framework apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and development management decision-taking. Section 12: conserving and enhancing the historic environment incorporates most of the policies previously found in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment and reads as follows:

- Para 126: Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
- Para 127: When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.
- Para 128: In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- Para 129: Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

- Para 130: Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.
- Para 131: In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- Para 132: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.
- Para 133. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
- Para 134: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- Para 135: The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- Para 136: Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
- Para 137: Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.
- Para 138: Not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.
- Para 139: Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.
- Para 140: Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

- Para 141: Local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.³⁰ However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

Regional Planning Policy

14.5 North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021: The North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) was adopted in September 2008. The RSS provides a framework for development and investment in the region over the next 15-20 years. It establishes a broad vision for the region and its sub-regions, priorities for growth and regeneration and policies to achieve sustainable development across a wide range of topics, from jobs, housing and transport to climate change, water and energy.

14.6 The adopted (2008) RSS replaces all of the saved policies in the (2005) Joint Lancashire Structure Plan. The RSS is part of the statutory development plan for every local planning authority in the North West. Local Development Documents (LDDs), which are prepared by the local planning authority, will be considered against the provisions of the RSS. Relevant RSS policies are summarised below:

- Policy DP 7 Promote Environmental Quality: Environmental quality should be protected and enhanced, understanding and respecting the character and distinctiveness of places and landscapes. The protection of the historic environment and good quality design should be promoted in new development, ensuring that it respects its setting.
- Policy EM 1 Integrating Enhancement and Protection of the Regions Environmental Assets: The Region's environmental assets should be identified, protected, enhanced and managed. Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should deliver an integrated approach to conserving and enhancing the landscape, natural environment, historic environment and woodlands of the region. Plans and strategies should define spatial objectives and priorities for conservation, restoration and enhancement as appropriate, and provide area-based guidelines to direct decisions and target resources. Priority should be given to conserving and enhancing areas, sites, features and species of international, national, regional and local landscape, natural environment and historic environment importance.
- Policy EM 1 (C) Historic Environment: Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, supporting conservation-led regeneration in areas rich in historic interest. In particular the regeneration potential of Pennine textile mill-town heritage that exists in east Lancashire and Greater Manchester, the textile mill-town heritage of East Cheshire and the traditional architecture of rural villages of Cumbria, Cheshire and Lancashire should be recognised.

14.7 It is important to note that the Government aims to abolish RSS through the provision of Section 109 of the Localism Act. This is yet to happen due to on-going Strategic Environmental Assessments to look at the impact of revoking each of the eight strategies. The Government has released The Strategic Environmental Assessment on the Revocation of the North West of England Regional Spatial Strategy: Environmental Report for consultation (until 18 February 2013). This report details the significant environmental impacts of the revocation of the North West of England Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy. As a result the intention to abolish RSS is a material consideration, but at this stage RSS remains an extant planning document.

Local Planning Policy Guidance

14.8 Tameside Unitary Development Plan: The adopted (2004) Tameside Unitary

Development Plan (UDP) has been saved as part of the Tameside Local Development Framework and will remain in force until such a time as it is updated and replaced. The UDP incorporates a number of policies relating to conservation areas and design quality in historic areas. These are summarised below:

- Policy C1 Townscape and Urban Form: This establishes the importance of designing in context with local character and topography and provides a link to urban design frameworks and area-specific supplementary planning guidance
- Policy C2 Conservation Areas: The character of Conservation Areas, including further changes to these areas, will be preserved or enhanced through the control of development and the promotion of improvement measures.
- Policy C3 Demolition of Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas: Demolition of any building within a Conservation Area requires Conservation Area Consent. This policy states that demolition of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area will not be permitted. There are exceptions, which should be dealt with according to the principles established for the demolition of a listed building. Buildings that make no positive contribution would only be considered for demolition if this is followed by positive development as soon as is practical.
- Policy C4 Control of Development in or adjoining Conservation Areas: Control of development in Conservation Areas will have regard to the desirability of enhancing or preserving character and appearance and the need to ensure that proposals make a positive contribution to their context.
- Policy C5 Alternative Uses, Alterations and Additions for Listed Buildings: Continuation of the original use is the most desirable but the Council will permit alternative uses for Listed Buildings if this is needed to support maintenance and preservation of the building. This is with the proviso that any alterations or additions do not adversely affect the essential character and that the design quality remains high.
- Policy C6 Setting of Listed Buildings: New development which detracts from the setting of a Listed Building will not be permitted.
- Policy C7 Enabling Development for Conservation of Heritage Assets: Enabling development may be required to enable restoration but this will only be allowed if certain specific criteria are met.
- Policy C8 Demolition of Listed Buildings: The Council will not recommend the demolition of listed buildings apart from in exceptional circumstances.



Illustration of the juxtaposition of early 19th century, late 20th century and early 21st century development in Portland Basin

14.9 Proposals Map: The Proposals Map identifies the Conservation Area and makes proposals within the Portland Basin Conservation Area. Three Development Opportunity Areas are identified in the eastern part of the area, bisected by the two canals and the River Tame. These relate to Policy E2 Site 2. This is described as suitable for residential, leisure, arts and culture, office, light industrial and supporting retail use. Mixed use is encouraged. The description reads: "This area is situated in the south west part of the town centre, centred around Portland Basin at the junction of the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals. Existing uses are mostly industrial, in properties of various ages and indifferent appearance, but the area includes Cavendish Mill, (now converted into flats) and the Junction Mill



Portland Basin Museum lies at the heart of the Conservation Area

chimney, which are both striking historic landmarks, and also the Portland Basin museum complex which has been rebuilt in a similar form to the original canal warehouse on the site. The River Tame also passes through the area and on the Dukinfield side a short canal arm has been reopened and a boat repair yard established. Planning permission has been granted for residential development on several pieces of land adjoining the museum and a compulsory purchase order made to complete the site assembly. There have been several studies of the area, including a development note prepared by the Council in 1999 and a design brief from consultants on 2000. The canal/riverside setting and visitor attraction offer potential for further redevelopment on sites within the area including expansion of marina facilities on the Dukinfield side. This could become a key waterside location in Tameside and on the waterways of the North West and it is vital that the area creates a suitably high quality environment and identity, with high quality natural materials used wherever appropriate.

14.10 The Ashton Canal to the east of the Portland Basin is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and any development proposed in the vicinity of the canal will be subject to close scrutiny to establish whether it might have an adverse effect on the special nature conservation interest of the site. The Ashton Canal and Peak Forest Canal are identified as Sites of Biological Importance (see Policies N1 and N2) and contain floating water plantain in places, which is a European protected species. These factors should also be taken into account in any nearby development.

14.11 The open space between these canals in the south-west part of the area is allocated as Protected Open Space (Policy OL4).

14.12 Tameside Council is preparing a new Local Plan to replace the adopted (2004) Tameside Unitary Development Plan. This will consist of a portfolio of documents that set out the borough's spatial plan, guiding development up to 2029 and addressing issues that are relevant to the borough. The first part of the Local Plan will be the Joint Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan document. This is the most important document in the Local Plan because it will establish the Vision, broad spatial strategy, strategic objectives, core and development policies for Tameside and a monitoring framework to assess how successful the plan is.



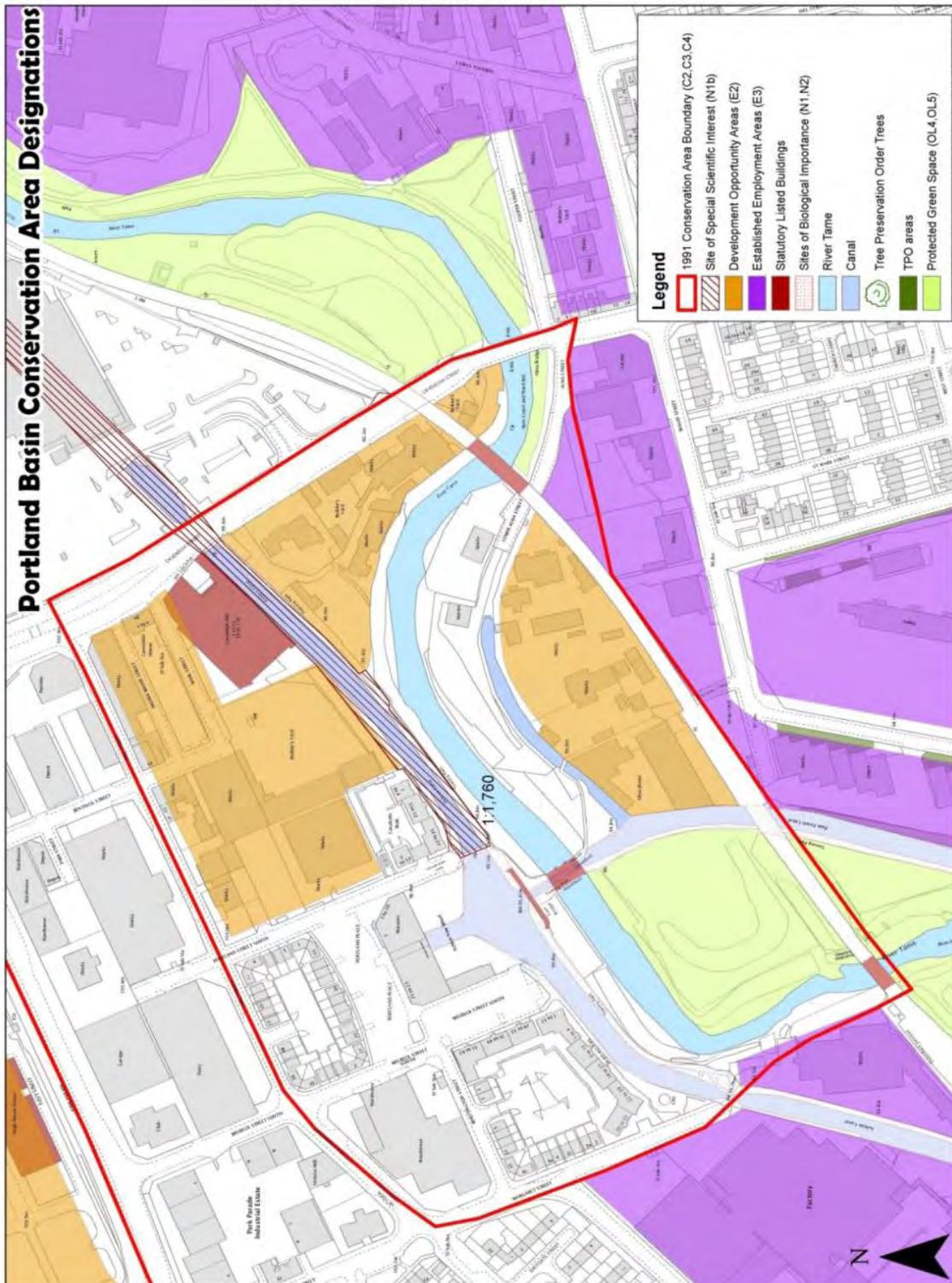
View west along the Ashton Canal adjacent to the recent residential development at Canalside Walk

14.13 The other Local Plan documents will follow on from the Core Strategy, principally the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, but also a suit of Supplementary Planning Documents to provide more detailed guidance to help applicants make successful planning applications.

14.14 Tameside Residential Design, Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), March 2010: The Residential Design SPD is intended to ensure that new residential developments and extensions are of the highest possible design quality. The Council considers it important that developers adopt a design-led approach to new residential development to create imaginative, safe, attractive and functional schemes that respond appropriately to their surroundings.

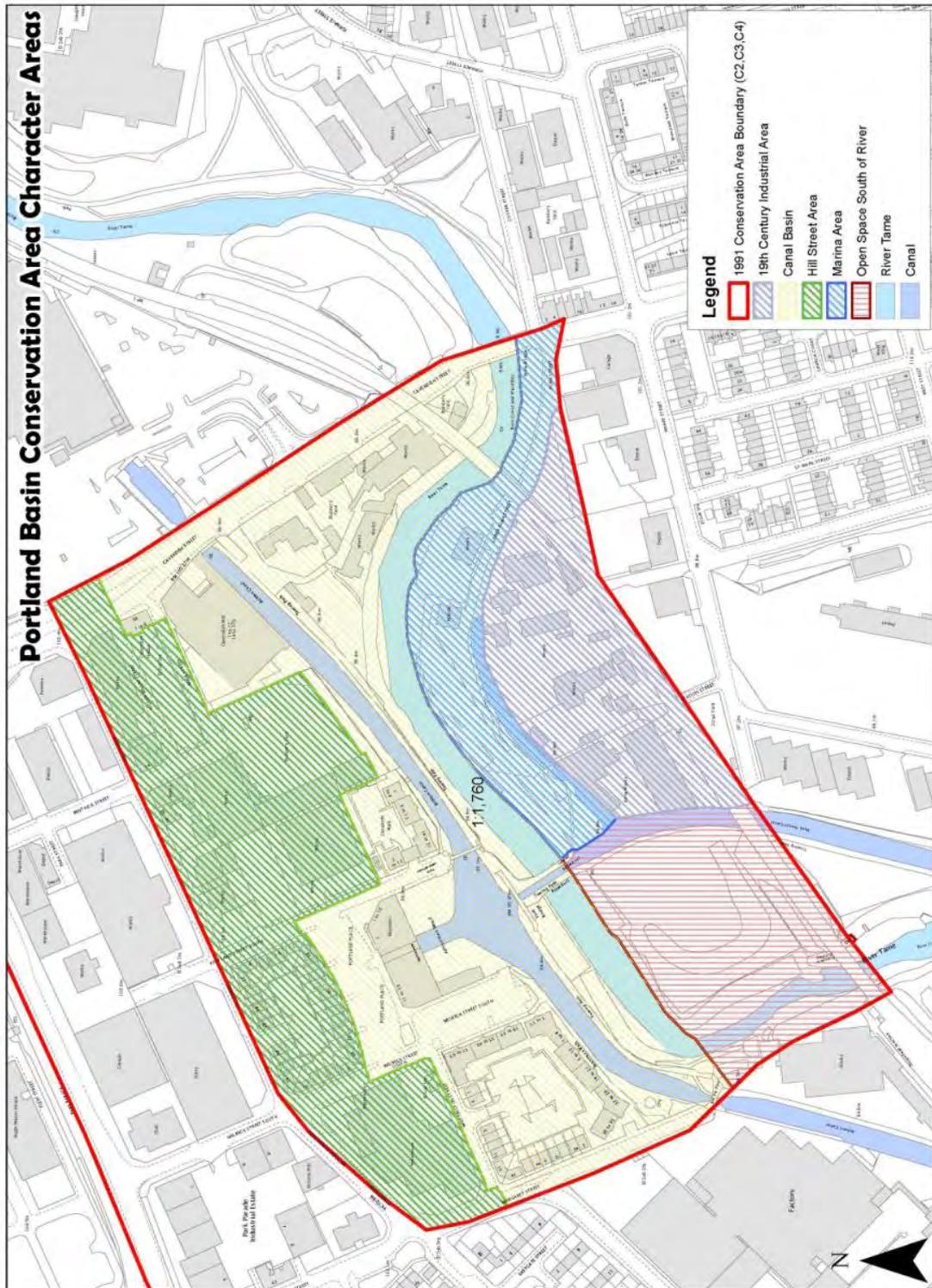
14.15 The document requires new development to be drafted with an understanding of character and identity, applying a respectful design that compliments or enhances it (Para.2.3 Character). The document also gives guidance on residential development which would affect either a listed building or conservation area. In such instances development would need to be in keeping with the scale, mass and detailing of the existing area, including the use of materials. The conversion or reuse of buildings of historic architectural value must also be undertaken sensitively with regard to preserving the building's character, setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest (Para. 2.4 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas).

15 Appendix 2 Maps



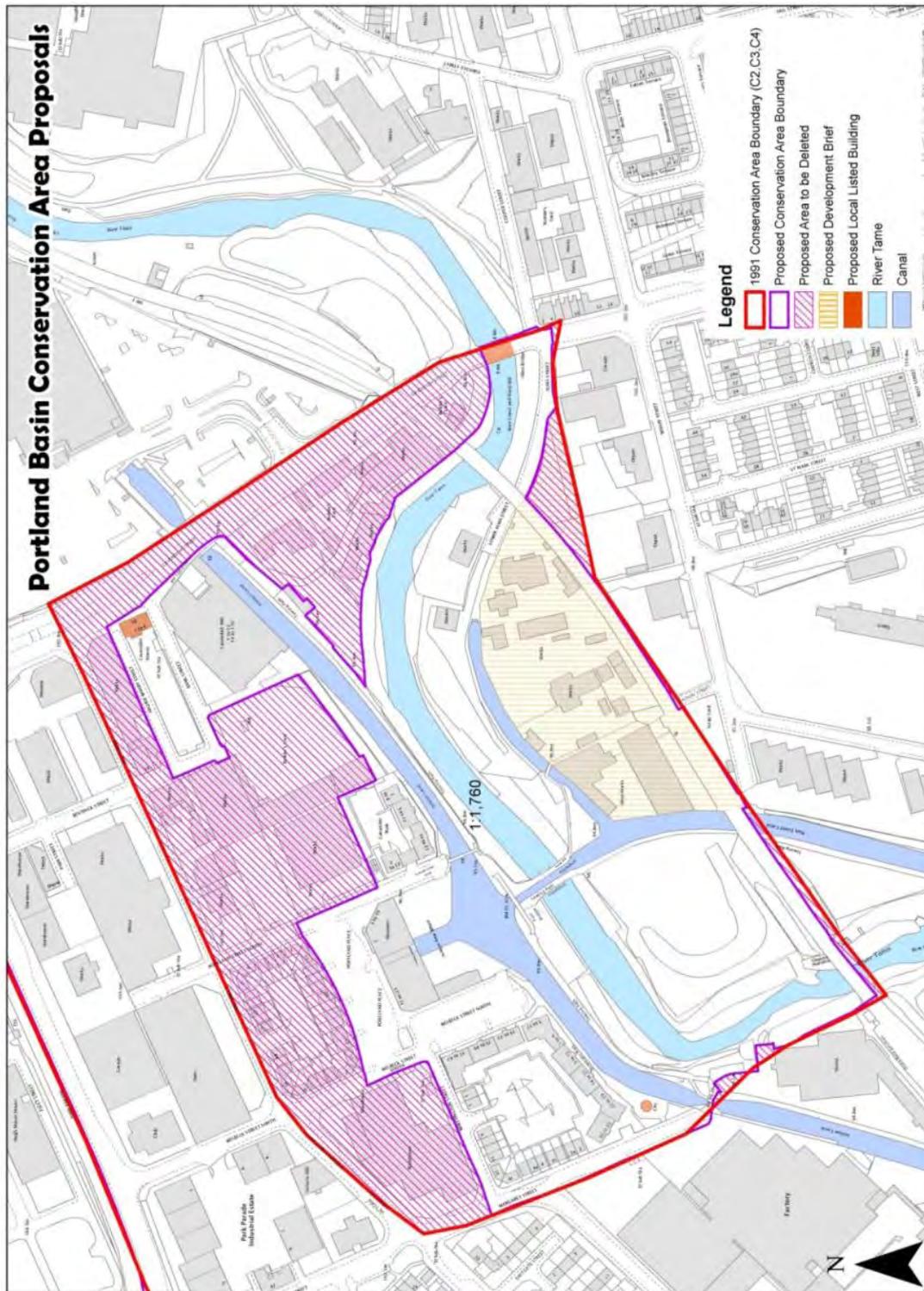
Portland Basin Conservation Area Designations (Not to Scale) © Crown copyright 2013. All rights reserved LA100022697

15 Appendix 2 Maps



Portland Basin Conservation Area Character Areas (Not to Scale) © Crown copyright 2013. All rights reserved LA100022697

15 Appendix 2 Maps



Portland Basin Conservation Area Character Areas (Not to Scale) © Crown copyright 2013. All rights reserved LA100022697

16 Appendix 3 References

16.1 Published References:

- Ashton Reporter 11th October 1990, Call in by Narrow Boat, History as you float
- Ashton Reporter 9th May 1990, Heritage Status for Basin Area
- Bowman 1960, England in Ashton-under-Lyne
- Department of Communities and Local Government 2012, National Planning Policy Framework
- English Heritage 2005, Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals
- English Heritage, Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas
- Government Office for the North West 2008, The North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021
- Haynes 1987, Cotton in Ashton
- Magee 1989, Directory of Ashton Pubs and Other Licences
- Nevell & Walker 2001, Portland Basin and the archaeology of the canal warehouse
- Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council 2004, Tameside Unitary Development Plan
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council 2005, Residential Development Guidelines, Supplementary Planning Guidance

16.2 Published Maps:

- Baines Map of Lancashire 1824
- OS Map 1852
- OS Map 1974
- OS Map 1884
- OS Map 1891
- OS Map 1909
- OS Map 2009

16.3 Images:

The following archive images have been provided by Tameside Library Local Studies and Archives:

- T12433 - Toll Bar Alma Bridge, King Street c.1900
- T13240 - Portland Basin, Tudor Mill and Cavendish Mill in the background
- T13196 - Portland Wharf and Ashton Canal Warehouse at Portland Basin
- T01879 - Cavendish Mill and R. F. Smith Ltd Potato Merchants

16.5 The modern images have been provided by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

16.6 Websites:

- www.penninewaterways.co.uk
- www.tameside.gov.uk/blueplaques/crimeanwar

16.7 Census Returns:

- 1841
- 1861
- 1881

Back Cover

