

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Heather Wynne
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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18th September 2019

Dear Heather

AVA/2019/0819: Creation of one off-road parking space in the front yard of 14 Short Street, Belper.

Please find below my response to the consultation concerning the above application. These comments will be taken to the World Heritage Site Conservation and Planning Panel for verification later this month.

The site lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) Buffer Zone. The Derwent Valley Mills were inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO in 2001. The Derwent Valley Mills Partnership, on behalf of HM Government, is pledged to conserve the unique and important cultural landscape of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site; to protect its outstanding universal value (OUV), to interpret and promote its assets; and to enhance its character, appearance and economic well-being in a sustainable manner.

The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) for the Derwent Valley Mills was adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2010. The SOUV refers to the following UNESCO criteria, which the World Heritage Committee agreed were met at the time of inscription. They are:

- C(ii) That the site exhibits “an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town planning or landscape design”;
- C(iv) That the site is “an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape, which illustrates a significant stage in human history”.

The SOUV records that these criteria were met for the following reasons:

- C(ii) The Derwent Valley saw the birth of the factory system, when new types of building were erected to house the new technology for spinning cotton developed by Richard Arkwright in the late 18th century.

C(iv) In the Derwent Valley for the first time there was large-scale industrial production in a hitherto rural landscape. The need to provide housing and other facilities for workers and managers resulted in the creation of the first modern industrial settlements.

A Management Plan for the World Heritage Site was created in 2002, and updated in 2014. It has as the first of its nine aims to: “protect, conserve and enhance the Outstanding Universal Value of the DVMWHS.” In accordance with this aim, and with reference to Section 12.1 of the Management Plan, I have consulted with Derbyshire County Council’s Conservation, Heritage and Design Service (which advises the World Heritage Site Partnership in planning matters), and have received the following advice:

This site is located within the Buffer Zone of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, which is designated to protect the ‘immediate’ setting of the Site. The application relates to a traditional stone cottage at the end of a short row, prominently visible on the junction between Short Street and Kilbourne Road, within a segment of land known as ‘The Gutter’. The cottages appear on the 1st Edition OS Plan, when the area was significantly less developed. This row would have formed part of a dispersed collection of cottages that formed a small settlement set within a distinctly agricultural setting of The Lawn, The Gutter, Bullsmoor Bottom and Whitemoor. This settlement was at that time separated from Belper by a patchwork of enclosed fields, the cottages set against the lanes at the edge of the field system. This would have been the character of the locality, after almost a century of expansion prompted by the introduction of the textile industry in the Derwent Valley. However, the cottage is not known to have any association with the Strutt estate or the textile industry, although it does represent a component of the social infrastructure of the settlement.

The proposed works involve the removal of part of the low stone boundary wall to the front of a property that has no land to the rear. The front area of the cottage is small, barely large enough for a vehicle, the presence of which, hard against the front wall of the cottage, would conceal almost half of its width up to the height of the vehicle.

On balance, the significance of the World Heritage Site would not be harmed, although the loss of part of the original boundary wall, and the dominance of a vehicle over a traditional cottage, would represent further adverse cumulative change to the locality.

I hope these comments can be considered when a decision is made concerning this development.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Farmer', written in a cursive style.

Adrian Farmer

Heritage Co-ordinator, Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.
cc Sarah Brooks, AVBC