

# DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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**Paul Wilson**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Derbyshire Dales District Council**  
**Town Hall**  
**Bank Road**  
**Matlock**  
**Derbyshire DE4 3NN**

2 May 2014

Dear Mr Wilson

## **I4/00133/FUL: Three Pitch Site at The Woodyard, Homesford.**

Please find below my response to the consultation concerning the above proposal. These comments will be taken to the World Heritage Site Conservation and Planning Panel for verification in June.

The site is within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, 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 Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Site was defined by the following criteria, agreed by UNESCO when the mills were inscribed. 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 UNESCO World Heritage Committee recorded 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 early 19<sup>th</sup> 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 towns.

A Management Plan for the World Heritage Site was created in 2002, and most recently amended in 2007. The Plan has as the second of its seven aims to: “*establish guidelines for the future management of the site, and the buildings and land within it, so that the special character of the cultural landscape is protected and enhanced.*” It also has as the sixth of its twenty-five objectives to: “*maintain and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the Derwent Valley Mills cultural landscape.*”

I have consulted with Derbyshire County Council’s Conservation and Design Section over this application, and have received the following advice:

The site abuts the A6, a turnpike road introduced nearly two centuries ago. The A6 road is one of the key transport routes developed along the Derwent Valley and is a key attribute of the World Heritage Site. Furthermore, the former turnpike road, and its associated structures are included on the Historic Environment Record (HER), for Derbyshire, for its historic significance and its origins as a private turnpike created by Richard Arkwright.

While this proposal represents a reduced level of permanently sited structures, by comparison with alternative proposals in previous applications for holiday lodges, it does involve the enclosure of the majority of the site, adjacent to the A6. The proposed development would have an adverse effect on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the DVMWHS by losing the open, undeveloped and therefore, natural character of the site. The site abuts the A6, a turnpike road introduced nearly two centuries ago. The A6 road is one of the key transport routes developed along the Derwent Valley and is an attribute of the World Heritage Site.

Currently, the site is fronted by a low stone wall, topped by a robust saddleback coping. The wall is only breached by the existing opening and aligned to accommodate sight lines on the south of the opening only. It is not clear from the application details whether the entire wall will be set back from its existing alignment, in order to accommodate visibility sight lines, but if this is the case, it would represent an undesirable break in the extensive continuity of this associated historic built structure along the A6 road.

One reason the Derwent Valley was inscribed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO is because it is an industrial landscape arrested in a rural setting. Development of the site as proposed will urbanise the setting of this section of the A6 and introduce artificial screening and domestic landscape features, i.e., the managed planting and formally laid out trees. This will create a site with a domestic character that is incongruous to the naturalistic broadleaf woodland that surrounds it. This will negatively impact on the setting of the A6 - the former turnpike road and one of the Site’s key attributes – and, therefore, the OUV of the DVMWHS.

It is for this reason the Conservation and Design Section has recommended to the World Heritage Site Partnership that it objects to development of this site in principle, as it has in the past.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrian Farmer". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Adrian" and the last name "Farmer" written in a single continuous line.

**Adrian Farmer**

Heritage Co-ordinator,

Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.