

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Paul Wilson
Corporate Director
Derbyshire Dales District Council
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17 November 2014

Dear Mr Wilson

I4/00617/FUL: Change of use of land for siting of 4 holiday lodges, erection of building for stable and store and new access 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 December.

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 19th 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 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 and Design Section (which advises the World Heritage Site Partnership in planning matters) over this application, and have received the following advice.

As previously described, 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.

This application is similar to the previous application for six holiday lodges. The current proposal represents a reduced level of permanently sited structures, by comparison with alternative proposals in previous applications for six holiday lodges and involves less enclosure of the site, with the northern part being used for a stable and store, which has planning permission. Nevertheless, the pitched roof lodges, of significant size, will be visible above the 2 metre high screen fencing and through landscaping that will not be substantial screening in a relatively narrow strip.

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 proposed to set-back a substantial length of wall from its existing alignment in order to accommodate visibility sight lines. This 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, introducing artificial screening and domestic landscape features. 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 as one of the Site’s key attributes – and, therefore, the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

It is for this reason the Conservation and Design Section recommended to the Derwent Valley Mills 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, appearing to read 'Adrian Farmer', written in a cursive style.

Adrian Farmer

Heritage Co-ordinator, Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.