

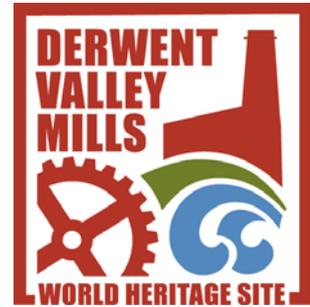
DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Paul Wilson
Corporate Director
Derbyshire Dales District Council
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9 December 2014

Dear Mr Wilson

I4/00767/VCOND: Variation of condition 2 (I4/00133/FUL) for permanent use of Homesford Woodyard as a three-pitch traveler site.

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 January.

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.

In our comments on the original application (14/00133/FUL), it was stated that the Conservation and Design Section had recommended to the Derwent Valley Mills WHS Partnership that it should object to development of this site, in principle, as it is considered that development would have an adverse effect on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. While this was irrespective of timescales, a permanent consent would certainly cause more significant harm by removing any ability to reinstate the site’s current natural character and ensure the inevitable incremental changes that occur over the life of an established site do not take place. In detail, the potential harm to the Site’s Outstanding Universal Value is reiterated in our original comments provided for information here again:

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 again objects to development of this site in principle, as it has in the past. Furthermore, we strongly recommend that the condition relating to the time limits for use of the site are not deleted from the extant consent.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Farmer'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping tail.

Adrian Farmer

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