

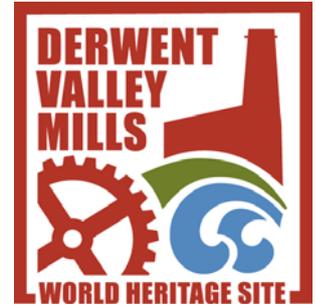
DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Sara John
Senior Planning Officer
Development Control
Neighbourhoods
Derby City Council
The Council House
Corporation Street
Derby DE1 2FS

6th May 2015

Dear Sara

Ref: DER/02/15/00210: Outline application with full details of 'Package One' for flood defence works along the river corridor, including sites from Darley Abbey, Little Chester, Chester Green, North Riverside, Bass Rec', Pride Park, to Alvaston Park, Derby.

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

Part of the proposed development lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. 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 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 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 and Design Section (which advises the World Heritage Site Partnership in planning matters) over this application, and the World Heritage Site Conservation and Planning Panel, and have received the following advice.

While the proposed works will impact on the visual environment of the various locations, it is considered that the impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of this part of the World Heritage Site is likely to be minimal. However, the aspects of the proposed interventions that will have a bearing on Outstanding Universal Value are in their response to the issues of ‘authenticity’ and ‘design quality’.

The most significant attributes of the World Heritage Site within the application site are the River Derwent itself and the former Silk Mill. While the flooding problems associated with the museum building are not directly addressed in this application, the proposed removal of trees provides an opportunity to link this area more closely to the heritage of the Silk Mill and the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site and co-ordinate with a parallel Initiative for a new visitor attraction for Derby, the Museum of Making. It is hoped that a co-ordinated approach will result through appropriate liaison between these two adjacent investments in public funding.

The new or replacement barrier structures are features most relevant to any potential impact on Outstanding Universal Value. While it is recognised that there is a critical need for these structures to work in functional terms, rather than them being a pure engineering solution, with the risk of having an anonymous and alien presence, the opportunity is presented in this project for a positive design response and contribution. The inappropriateness of a single detail solution is particularly demonstrated around the Stone House Prebend and Derwent House where the extensive pier and panelled wall imposes a modern urban detail on a historic site demanding a more rural setting.

The indicative visualisations acknowledge that the extensive lengths of the defence walls require to be broken up, visually, with piers, panels with canted plinth details and bull-nose art stone copings. In terms of materials, the proposed solution of engineering bricks does not respond specifically to context. Facing bricks that more closely match their immediate context would help to integrate the

new insertions. If stone were to be the appropriate dressing material, then natural stone, rather than art(ificial) stone would fulfil the criteria for authenticity and design quality.

Alternatively, the structure need not adopt the standard solution of mock heritage features, with arbitrary proportions and detailing. The collective series of structures could act as a vehicle for interpretation containing a playful and engaging theme running through the various locations. A more acceptable response to materials might use concrete, honestly expressed, with reference to the wall's role of flood defence. For example, it could contain an imaginative interpretation of the flood levels or symbolic imagery associated with the Derby's relationship with the river and its inherent flood risk, articulated as a work of art that weaves its way through Derby's urban fabric. It could also potentially pick up on the World Heritage Site or relate specifically to picking up on the theme of flooding and its flood defences.

It is expected that any potential loss of tree cover along the route would be replaced at an appropriate level to mitigate the visual effect of their removal.

Given the scale of intervention into this sensitive area, the World Heritage Site Partnership suggests that the proposals should be referred to an independent design review body such as OPUN, or, that the design could be developed further with Derby City's own urban design team. The WHS Partnership would be willing to review any future design iterations to ensure that they do not negatively impact on the Outstanding Universal Value.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrian Farmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Adrian Farmer,

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