

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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11th July 2016

Jon Bradbury
Development Manager
Derbyshire Dales District Council
Town Hall
Bank Road
Matlock

Dear Mr Bradbury,

16/00367/OUT: Erection of two buildings for Uses A1 (Retail), B1 (Business) and B8 (Storage/Distribution) via existing access (outline) at The Woodyard, Homesford.

Please find below the World Heritage Site response to the consultation concerning the above application. These comments will be taken to the World Heritage Site Conservation and Planning Panel for verification at their next meeting in September.

The site is located 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 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.

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. Currently, the site addresses the A6 with a low-level dry stone wall featuring a simple saddleback coping. Access onto the site from the A6 is provided by an existing opening within this. The site is largely vacant aside from a storage container and a relatively small timber accommodation unit that appears to be associated with the ‘Conservation Crafts’ business.

The current proposal is for the erection of two identical storage units each measuring 18m x 12m with a ridge height of 6m. The elevations indicate that the buildings would feature a 1.0m high gritstone plinth and pre-coloured corrugated steel cladding and roofing. The location plan is not very clear although it appears to represent these at opposite ends of the site with the longest blank elevations against the A6.

Two ‘industrial style’ units as proposed would represent over-development of this site, detracting from the rural character of this part of the WHS and therefore its OUV. The World Heritage Site Partnership would also question the sustainability of the proposed uses in the units in this location.

The proposed development, it is felt, will impact negatively on the rural character of this stretch of the A6 - the former turnpike road and one of the DVMWHS’s key attributes. To this end the proposals will adversely affect the WHS’s Outstanding Universal Value, and it is for this reason we object to this development on this site.

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'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Adrian Farmer

Heritage Co-ordinator
Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.
cc Mark Askey, DDDC.