

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Paul Wilson
Corporate Director
Derbyshire Dales District Council
Town Hall
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04 February 2014

Dear Mr Wilson

13/00838/FUL: Change of use of land to use for siting of 8 holiday lodges (chalets) 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 March.

The site is within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, and one of the attributes which contributes to its Outstanding Universal Value. 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 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 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 pre-application, and have received the following advice:

This site, on which the DVMWHS Partnership has objected to development before, is situated north of Homesford Cottage on the eastern side of the A6.

The Derwent Valley Mills Partnership has judged the proposals on the basis of the material submitted, and feels the present plan for eight wooden chalets will diminish the unique nature of that section of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, compromising its character as an area of arrested development and representing an inappropriate insertion into a highly visible area abutting the A6, where little has changed since the turnpike road and its associated structures were introduced nearly two centuries ago.

The transport routes developed along the Derwent Valley in the late 18th and early 19th century contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site and their setting needs to be preserved if that contribution is to be maintained. This development would also set a dangerous precedent for eroding the setting of the turnpike road and the World Heritage Site as a whole.

Furthermore, the mitigation measures of hedge and tree planting proposed along the site’s boundary with the A6, is not appropriate to the landscape character of the context and would compound the detrimental effect of the proposed development.

It is for this reason the Conservation and Design Section has recommended the World Heritage Site Partnership objects to development for this site in principle.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adrian Farmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Adrian Farmer

Heritage Co-ordinator
Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.