

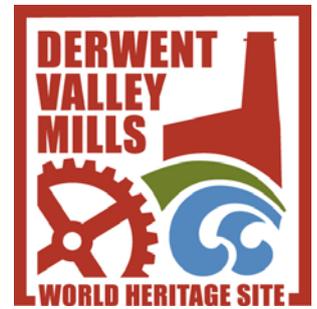
DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Sarah Pearce
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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19th January 2018

Dear Sarah

AVA/2017/1395: Demolition of dwelling, construction of a replacement dwelling with associated external alterations at Iretons Farm, Whitewells Lane, Belper.

Please find below my response to the consultation concerning the above application. These comments will be taken to the World Heritage Site Conservation and Planning Panel for verification in February.

The site lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) Buffer Zone. 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 retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) for the Derwent Valley Mills was adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2010. The SOUV refers to the following UNESCO criteria, which the World Heritage Committee agreed were met at the time of inscription. 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 SOUV records 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, Heritage and Design Service (which advises the World Heritage Site Partnership in planning matters), and have received the following advice:

The landscape character of this site is visibly rural, open countryside of the river valley slopes, with sparse historic farmsteads scattered along the hillside within agricultural field pattern accessed along narrow lanes. The site itself has no history of development before about 1940. Map evidence shows no historic development for either a farm or residential plot on this site. The name of ‘Ireton’s Farm’ is, therefore, confusing in terms of the use of the land. The existing house that occupies this site is a mid-twentieth century house. Although not of any notable architectural quality or significance, the modest bungalow is typical of the period it represents, in terms of its size and appearance. It sits in relative isolation, with glimpses of non-substantial, lightweight buildings behind, mainly due to the rising topography of this hillside site. It is noted that the application relates to the dwelling only and not the more extensive building to the rear.

Although the proposed dwelling would be an increase in scale, both in footprint and height, proposing a two storey dwelling with a cruciform plan, the amended proposals under application AVA/2015/0903 set a precedent for the increase in size. Assuming the approved dwelling on drawing no 4275 (40) 401 rev G has approval, the latest proposal is essentially the same.

While the design is nominally traditional, the south and east elevations contain an excessive number of windows, which would present a non-traditional wall ratio of solid to void, as demonstrated in White Wells Farm on the opposite side of the lane. This equally applies to the north elevation, although this is less prominent. A more authentic appearance would be achieved were there to be fewer and smaller window openings to the highly visible elevations; at the very least, the four triple-light windows to the south gable should be reduced, as there is a window facing the lane, to the east, on both floors.

Any alterations to the vehicular access, and the locally distinctive drystone wall, should be limited in order to preserve an appropriately agricultural scale and character, although it is noted that the application form states that there are none, contrary to the arrangement shown on the block plan.

The notable lack of detail relating to materials is acknowledged in the application form, accepting that conditions will be attached to any permission. Wall, roof and window materials will be key factors in achieving the required quality for the site’s context of international significance.

In principle, it is considered that the setting and therefore the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, would not be harmed by the proposals, particularly if the amendments described are undertaken.

I hope these comments can be considered when a decision is made concerning this development.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "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.
cc Sarah Johnson, AVBC