

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Liz Prior
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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15th February 2018

Dear Liz

AVA/2017/1343: Two story rear extension, removal of internal wall and creation of hard standing area and gates at 64 Belper Lane, Hilltop, 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 later this month.

The site lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS). 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:

This dwelling, forming part of a pair, is listed in grade II and within the Belper and Milford Conservation Area. The row of listed paired cottages front Mount Pleasant farm, which together once formed an isolated group of buildings along Belper Lane. Its contribution to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site would be greater were it to have had a known association with the Strutt estate.

The proposed works include a two-storey rear extension, internal alterations to the ground and first floors, involving a degree of loss to the floor plan layout with the loss of internal walls, new openings to the side walls and the rear gable to access the new accommodation and the closing up of others. Cumulatively, therefore, the package of works is relatively significant.

As a historic building with national interest, it makes a contribution to the special historic interest of the conservation area and the OUV of the World Heritage Site. Its direct link with the textile narrative is unknown, other than the dwellings having been built contemporaneously with the rapidly developing factory based textile industry. To that extent, there would be a degree of harm to the OUV of the World Heritage Site, through the loss of integrity and authenticity, although it is acknowledged that the harm would be greater to the intrinsic special interest of the listed building. While a precedent may have been set by the extension on the adjoining property, the logical response would be to prevent any further loss and change to this pair of cottages, in order to preserve as much of its authenticity and integrity.

In conclusion and on balance, there would be harm to the OUV of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site as a result of the proposed works. I hope these comments can be considered when a decision is made concerning this development.

Yours sincerely



Adrian Farmer

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

cc Sarah Johnson, AVBC