

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Sarah Pearce
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
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20th February 2018

Dear Sarah

AVA/2018/0181: Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for previously approved AVA/2014/0886, on land to rear of 144A Kilbourne Road, 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) 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:

Outline permission was granted for a single dwelling of unspecified size and scale, on the rear garden of this relatively modern bungalow (AVA/2014/0886). The current application is seeking approval of the reserved matters.

While there is no precedent for any buildings outside this logical development pattern, the principle of erecting a single dwelling has been established, subject to acceptable detail.

This wide plot sits between early-twentieth century terraced properties to the north and south, the gardens of which are immediately adjacent to the open agricultural countryside of Bullsmoor. This open landscape is a contributory attribute of the world heritage site’s significance and therefore a heritage asset of the highest value. Pottery Farm is close to the application site, separated only by a narrow stretch of agricultural land.

While the fields are edged by the linear residential development, the houses form a regular and continuous visual edge, set behind the open spaces of the domestic rear gardens. The proposed dwelling would run contrary to this pattern, introducing a visible structure into the open landscape and agricultural setting of Pottery Farm.

The proposed design is overtly domestic and ‘sub-urban’ in character, with traditional brick and tile, external fabric, cottage style dormers and bay windows, fascia boards, finials, decorative stone copings and an expressive chimney piece.

Given its prominent location within the Buffer Zone, and its close proximity to a listed farmhouse and the surviving elements of its agricultural setting, it is considered that the design is not an appropriate response to either its sensitive, high value heritage context its context or its exceptional siting outside the general form and grain of the prevailing residential development. It therefore fails to meet the requirements of achieving sustainable development, as required by the NPPF as a result of its design; (*NPPF 7. Requiring good design: The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people*).

Were a contemporary design to be developed, an intervention into this sensitive and prominent location could be satisfactorily assimilated. The scale and form is not necessarily unacceptable, but by an innovative use of materials

and detailing, incorporation of the chimney and contemporary styled roof lighting, could fit into its context far more successfully.

Although the site is contained within the established development, it is considered that there would be harm caused to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, by the visual intrusion of a sub-urban styled dwelling into the open countryside. However, this harm would be mitigated if the dwelling were to be more responsive to its open agricultural context.

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 with a large initial 'A'.

Adrian Farmer

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

cc Sarah Johnson, AVBC