

# DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Liz Prior  
Amber Valley Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Ripley  
Derbyshire DE5 3BT

7th March 2018

Dear Liz

**AVA/2018/0129: Alterations to gable end of building with provision of smooth render to replace old rough render; new windows and new door at 2 Belper House, Church Street, 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 next 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 listed building is the surviving portion of a larger building, which was a very fine architectural solution to a difficult site that originally tapered down to a narrow width, at the junction between High Street and Church Street. The end two bays were removed to facilitate sight lines at this vehicular junction. The resultant severed face has been visually unattractive and unsatisfactory since that time. Despite attempts to improve the appearance of the building nothing has happened. This current proposal, therefore, is a welcome opportunity to enhance the appearance of the building, the presentation of the World Heritage Site and the conservation area.

The ground floor use of the building as a shop is welcomed as it will contribute towards a lively frontage to this part of the town. It also reflects the original ground floor uses of the building when it was complete.

A simple, honest contemporary approach has been adopted for the solution to repairing and enhancing this wall, which was only ever a non-visible internal wall that never incorporated external windows or shopfronts. The addition of a third first floor window opening will present an approximate symmetry, which together with the formal shopfront arrangement and existing pair of gables, will provide a degree of interest and order.

The success of such a minimal design depends on the basic proportions, materials, detailing and colour scheme. It is therefore recommend that the scheme is developed with Amber Valley BC’s Conservation officer to ensure an outcome befitting the status of the world heritage site.

It is considered that the current proposal would not harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. Furthermore, it is considered that the works would enhance the appearance of the listed building, the presentation of the world heritage site and the conservation area.

Yours sincerely



**Adrian Farmer**

Heritage Co-ordinator, Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.  
cc Sarah Johnson, AVBC