

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Liz Prior
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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29th May 2018

Dear Liz

AVA/2018/0377: Replacement of three front uPVC windows and uPVC front door with new uPVC at 1 Nottingham 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 in July.

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:

The application relates to a stone cottage, contained within a row of three-storey cottages, on Nottingham Road, but with a marginally higher top storey. The row of houses is located within the Belper and Milford Conservation Area. An Article 4 Direction is in force in the conservation area to control the appearance of replacement windows. The first floor window and its opening is authentic in most respects, but significant changes have been made to those on the ground and top storeys. The door and its frame are modern within an original opening.

There is no evidence that this row of vernacular cottages was built by the mill owning Strutt family, although it contributes to the character and appearance of the town and hence to the significance of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

The application is for the replacement of two existing uPVC window frames, which currently have top- or side-opening casements, with sash-style sliding windows in uPVC. The timber sliding sash to the first floor is proposed to be replaced with similar frames to those proposed above and below, in uPVC.

The proposed replacement windows would be a contrived version of 2-over-2 vertically sliding sashes, again in uPVC frames with double-glazed units, to match similar frames in adjacent dwellings. The glazing bar would be applied to the glass face or be inserted within a sealed unit; false ‘horns’ are also proposed.

The ‘authenticity’ of architectural detail is of high worth to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site. The proposed window frames offer nothing by way of enhancement to the authenticity of the traditional details.

The ‘integrity’ of the architectural detail is also of high value in the World Heritage Site. Its integrity is already compromised, in the main, but is capable of being restored. The replacement of the surviving sliding sash would represent a loss of integrity to the World Heritage Site.

The replacement window and door frames proposed would not assist in the restoration of the integrity of this component of the row and hence the wider Site. The proposed frames are considered to be unacceptable in detail, by virtue of the material of their construction.

Given that the cottage contributes to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, it is considered that the loss of traditional joinery and the exchange of modern frames, in the form proposed, would cause harm to its significance and cannot therefore be supported.

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.

Adrian Farmer

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