

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Sarah Pearce
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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7th August 2018

Dear Sarah

AVA/2018/0664: Proposed conversion of existing stable block to dwelling at Bungalow Farm, Dalley Lane, Blackbrook.

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 September.

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 site is close to the World Heritage Site, and the grade II* listed Dalley Farm. Bungalow Farm is not a historic farmstead, with no buildings on this land until the first quarter of the twentieth century. However, it sits within the relic rural landscape into which the textile mills was inserted, within the late 18th century. The application building is of basic coursed stone construction, with a distinctly utilitarian character. Openings are limited and located, typically, on one side of the stable block, related to the ‘farmyard’. The north elevation is devoid of openings.

The degree of change proposed to achieve the conversion is not insignificant, comprising the loss of the blank rear wall by the insertion of three new openings to relate to the proposed domestic curtilage to the north; a more permanent, higher quality roof covering; three rooflights facing open countryside, and an element of new building that would extend the ridge line of the stable block, as a replacement to the more subservient lean-to structure.

The concern for this proposal is the cumulative loss of agricultural character to the immediate setting of the World Heritage Site, with an inversely proportional increase in domestic character. Given the relatively small scale development, involving the retention of an existing building that makes some contribution to the rural character, it is considered that an objection based on harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site could not reasonably be sustained. However, were the proposal to receive a recommendation for approval, Amber Valley is urged to secure mitigation for the inevitable impact of the proposal through all means possible, including minimising the number of openings within the wall and roof, securing appropriate window detail, minimising the domestic curtilage, removal of permitted development rights and the use of appropriately high quality external materials, selected with regard to local distinctiveness and rural character.

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