

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Rae Gee
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
Derbyshire DE5 3BT

7th August 2018

Dear Rae

AVA/2018/0582: Redevelopment of Wakebridge Farm to form a sheep dairy enterprise with associated creamery, hotel, bar and restaurant with two timber framed cabins at Wakebridge Farm, Wakebridge.

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 boundary of the Buffer Zone, along this section of the Site, was drawn to include its landscape setting, as far as the skyline, when viewed from within it. Wakebridge is included within the wooded hill top of Leashaw Wood, Leashaw Brow and Cliffside. This wooded area contains the farmstead of Wakebridge, which is screened from views within the World Heritage Site. The farmstead, in common with others in this local landscape character, has been developed in the twentieth century by the addition of a significant numbers of modern agricultural buildings. The proposed use of Wakebridge Farm retains an agricultural use, albeit with the land related to the historic farm having an increased coverage of agricultural buildings. Despite this intensification, its continued agricultural activity is part of the landscape character and would not constitute a loss of the rural landscape setting of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. It is therefore considered that there would be no harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. Nevertheless, mitigation measures, to reduce its visual impact – by way of setting the sheds into the sloping topography, rather than rising out of it, and the use of recessive materials and colours – should be exploited to their full potential.

The investment into the repair and re-use of this designated heritage asset and the introduction of a rural visitor attraction for the world heritage site is welcomed. However, in terms of visual amenity, it is expected that the Local Planning Authority will ensure that the new agricultural buildings, and the related visitor car parking, will be designed to minimise their visual impact, through mitigation measures such as the use of recessive colours and soft landscaping, appropriate to the landscape character type for this area.

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