

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Mark Penford
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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16th November 2018

Dear Mark

AVA/2018/0684: Outline application for one four bed detached dwelling plus double garage at Old Goods Yard, rear of Family Tree, Derby Road, Whatstandwell.

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 week.

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 site is located within the Whatstandwell Conservation Area. The former Derwent Hotel (The Family Tree) is listed Grade II, as is the adjacent outbuilding to the north east of the hotel. The road bridge over the river is listed in Grade II as is the nearby bridge over the canal, carrying Main Road. Alderwasley Lodge, which is an isolated building at the opposite end of the bridge to the Derwent Hotel, is listed in Grade II also.

The site is intimately located within the linear threads that define the significance of the World Heritage Site, namely the River Derwent, the former turnpike road, the Cromford Canal and Stephenson’s railway.

The character of the locality, at this river crossing, is undeniably rural. Historically, this small group of buildings was developed specifically to serve the transport functions that converged on this junction of river, road, canal and rail; the buildings were deliberately positioned in association with those functions. The station was moved from this limited site, between the railway and the river, to one slightly further south, with the loss of what must have been a small, earlier station building. The absence of buildings along this stretch of land, adds to the open rural character that contributes to the significance of the World Heritage Site.

The cottages within this small group of buildings, remote from those higher up in Crich Carr/Whatstandwell, along Main Road, would most likely be associated with workers connected with the railway and/or the canal. The Derwent Hotel, itself was conveniently located to exploit the passing trade. The contribution of each building is capable of interpretation within the narrative of the World Heritage Site, presented in context of minimal change.

It is proposed, initially, to create one plot for a detached house and detached garage on land that was used as the former goods yard for the railway. The intention to increase the number of dwellings is explicit in the application documents. Notwithstanding the specific reference to the physical layout, as indicated on the application documents, the principle of development of this type is considered to be incongruous and, therefore, unacceptable.

The dwelling would introduce an unprecedented and substantial family home, with 4-bedrooms, its own detached garage, domestic amenity space and car parking appropriate to the size of accommodation, laid out in a distinctly suburban form. In comparison with the existing buildings, their development pattern and rationale, the proposed dwelling would be entirely unjustified, having no functional relationship with this small transportation ‘hub’. The

introduction of a dwelling and its associated domestic curtilage, would also result in a loss of the open rural character of the world heritage site and the conservation area.

In summary, it is considered that the principle of private residential development on this site would be harmful to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

I hope these comments can be considered when a decision is made concerning this development.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrian Farmer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and 'F'.

Adrian Farmer

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

cc Sarah Brooks, AVBC