

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Mark Penford
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
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14th December 2018

Dear Mark

AVA/2018/0864: Approval of reserved matters following the approval of AVA/2017/1294 re Holly Cottage, Longwalls 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 January.

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:

While the Partnership’s comments relating to the style of the house, submitted as part of the reserved matters application, have been addressed, it is regrettable that the proposed design has not better responded to the site context through an appropriate site analysis. It is acknowledged that the removal of all the false, inappropriate Victorian detailing from a house type with an unchanged layout and massing, leaves a more traditional brick dwelling. However, given the prominence of the site, both the site layout and house design offer nothing more than a standard response that makes little acknowledgement to the sensitivity of the site and the significance of the locality. The retention of the full width, ‘rear’ ground floor lean-to over-complicates the traditional vernacular house form; the shallow brick porch also lacks authenticity of form and scale; the casement window details are also standard modern joinery, as found on sub-urban housing developments. Furthermore, the lack of consideration for the potential impact of inappropriate boundary treatment to private amenity space on this prominent site is an additional concern for the visual amenity of this small settlement and its rural character.

While the principal of a single dwelling has been established, Amber Valley Borough Council should satisfy itself that its policy’s on design quality and local distinctiveness, together with the guidance within the revised NPPF, satisfies the requirements of the development in respect of scale, layout and detailed aspects of this intervention. For the reasons described above, it is considered that the development would not protect, conserve or enhance the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site as set out in Policy 1.5 of its Management Plan 2014-2019: “Development which would impact inversely on the DVMWHS, BZ its OUV or its setting should not be permitted”.

The level of harm to the setting of the world heritage site would be ‘less than substantial’, though significant, nevertheless, in the context of this single site and the settlement. 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 Brooks, AVBC