

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Mark Penford
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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22nd January 2019

Dear Mark

AVA/2018/0864: Approval of reserved matters following the approval of AVA/2017/1294 on land at 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 later this month.

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 most recent amendments to the application for approval of reserved matters are probably just about acceptable, although this highlights the shortcomings of an outline planning route, once the principle of development has been accepted. It must be noted what a frustrating process has been undertaken, involving considerable expenditure of time and resources, some of which has been abortive. Regrettably, the solution, whilst possibly difficult to resist, in terms of its impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site alone, is a missed opportunity for a development that was an honest representation of its time.

Comparison between the indicative design included in the LVIA to the outline application (Principal Viewpoint 3: The Old Post Office Proposed View, page 34) and the subsequent versions proposed, demonstrate the variations submitted, each demanding its own assessment of acceptability. Some aspects of the local planning authority’s design advice have not been taken into consideration, with a traditional approach having been adopted rather than seeking the potential advantages that a contemporary response could have offered.

The submitted design is lacking in detail for the key elements that will contribute to a satisfactory development. In pursuance of authenticity, it is assumed that, for the chosen traditional design to be justified, it will be faithful to such details of external materials, windows opening details and frames, door openings, frames and door construction, eaves and verge details and rainwater goods, which will presumably be secured prior to determination or form part of the condition for any approval of the reserved matters.

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 Brooks, AVBC