

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Sarah Pearce
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
Derbyshire DE5 3BT

22nd January 2019

Dear Sarah

AVA/2018/1156: Change of use from dance studio to mixed use plus alterations to front elevation at Wulf Investments Ltd, Campbell Street, Belper.

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). 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:

This unlisted building is located within the commercial centre of the town. Investment into the building for active uses within the town centre is welcomed. The changes to the building are generally internal and therefore acceptable. In terms of the external changes, the proposed traditionally-styled shopfronts to the existing openings are not appropriate to a building with no previous association with traditional retailing. Authenticity is an essential characteristic within the World Heritage Site.

Any design devices that could be employed to preserve the building’s utilitarian character, as part of its re-use and refurbishment, would be beneficial in acknowledging the high heritage value of the locality, within a designated conservation area and the World Heritage Site. The borough’s conservation officer would be able to provide advice in this respect, with a view to developing contemporary detailing or interpretation, which would be a more appropriate design strategy. In conjunction with appropriate colour schemes for the external joinery items these elements could all contribute to a satisfactory solution.

It is considered that the proposed change of use and associated works would not harm the Outstanding Universal Value of Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, particularly if the detailed aspects of the proposal are developed with sensitivity, quality and recognition of its significant context.

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', written in a cursive style.

Adrian Farmer

Heritage Co-ordinator, Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.
cc Sarah Brooks, AVBC