

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Heather Wynne
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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21st March 2019

Dear Heather

AVA/2019/0178: Change of use from public house to a residential dwelling at 73 Mill Lane, 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) 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 building appears on the 1st edition OS map, as a ‘beer house’, as confirmed in the supporting Design & Access Statement. At the time it was surveyed and mapped, Mill Lane had a disused corn mill on the Coppice Brook and a ‘blacking mill’ close to the row of stone cottages, of which the beer house formed part. The row of stone cottages, of which the current 73 Mill Lane forms a part, has been incorporated within later residential development, which extends along Mill Lane, as far as the boundary with the former deer park and to the south.

73 Mill Lane could be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and an attribute of the World Heritage Site (buffer zone), and were its demolition to be proposed, this could represent harm to the significance of the Site. However, only a change of use is proposed from a public house, which has ceased to trade, to a single dwelling with minimal external alterations.

It is regrettable that the windows could not be replaced with traditional painted timber sliding sash windows, appropriate to the age and character of this historic property. However, the pattern proposed would be marginally better than the modern uPVC frames currently in the building. It would also be preferable if the surviving front boundary wall could be preserved and accommodated within the parking arrangement, as the proposals seem to be unclear on this issue, in the application documents.

In summary, the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site would not be adversely impacted on by the proposed works, although the authenticity and integrity of the Site, in addition to the improved appearance of the building itself, could be achieved with a more sensitive and conservative approach to the replacement of the window frames.

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