

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Heather Wynne
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
Derbyshire DE5 3BT

4th April 2019

Dear Heather

AVA/2019/0217: Replacement of windows and doors, removal of porch, creation of rear balcony and removal of entrance pillars at 5 Church 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 in June.

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 site is located within the Belper and Milford Conservation Area. The conservation area has an Article 4 Direction in force to control detrimental alterations to buildings within the designated area.

The relatively modern dwelling is somewhat incongruous within this historic context and contains few elements that characterise the conservation area. Consequently, it makes no positive contribution to its character or appearance. However, being within an area, the special architectural or historic interest of which is desirable to preserve, the potential exists to enhance the appearance of the building and the contribution it could make.

The existing window frames, fascias and soffits are in the traditional material of timber. Their proposed replacement could potentially be improved through careful attention to detailing and choice of materials. Regrettably, it is considered that the use of uPVC for the replacement of these elements would not result in any enhancement to the appearance of the dwelling, and as such the works and the associated investment represents a missed opportunity. However, given that this single, modern building makes no contribution to the significance of the World Heritage Site, it is considered that there would be no harm to its Outstanding Universal Value arising from the proposed works.

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