

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Alan Redmond
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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8th May 2019

Dear Alan

AVA/2019/0311: Advertisement consent for 3 pavement side shop front windows at 54 Bridge 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 property, located within the Belper and Milford Conservation Area, is a ground floor retail property with a large area of shopfront glazing. It is assumed that the proposed use has no need for window display, indeed it may require a degree of visual privacy. The proposed translucent films, including the business logos, to large areas of the glass would lose something of the potential lively frontage of this part of Bridge Street. Similar type of work has been undertaken to the restaurant next door to this property, which has a cumulative impact on the frontage experience. However, limited inter-visibility with the interior of the shop unit would remain in narrow strips below and above the applied films and the proposed works would be reversible were the use to change in the future. Given that the property is located outside the main retail core of King Street, the range of potential uses would naturally be expanded.

While a full lively frontage would be preferable, the proposals would have the benefit of bringing the building back into use, to contribute to the economy and mix of services within the town centre. In terms of the significance of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, being more related to the retailing character of the town, the proposals are considered not to harm its Outstanding Universal Value.

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 with some loops and flourishes.

Adrian Farmer

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