

# DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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

8th May 2019

Dear Heather

**AVA/2019/0328: Garage conversion, new render finish to existing front single storey extension and replacement doors and windows at Old Station House, 14 Goods Road, 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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:

Located by the North Midland railway line of 1838-40, this former Station House is likely to have been the work of the celebrated railway architect, Francis Thompson (1808–1895). The house appears on the 1st edition OS Plan with the typical symmetrical plan, comprised of a central block with flanking wings. The hipped roof with generous eaves projections are characteristics of the architect’s style. As such, it should be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and an attribute of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, positively contributing to its significance and to the special historic interest of the Belper and Milford Conservation Area.

However, the building is significantly degraded, having been subdivided into three dwellings and with its external appearance being much altered. Practically, its appearance could be enhanced, by removal of the render, the front extension and the reinstatement of window and door openings and frames of appropriate detail, although its multiple ownership would be problematic.

The proposed works would not bring about any improvement to its appearance but, equally, it would cause no further harm. The opportunity is presented to maintain the spirit of the original symmetry by ensuring that the ground floor windows are at least of equal sized, proportion and position, relative to the central doorway.

Furthermore, given that both frames to the front elevation are proposed to be replaced, windows of a more appropriate pattern could be fitted to improve the appearance of the stationmaster’s house; indeed, the specification for all the replacement windows and doors suggest that the applicant would welcome the guidance from the local planning authority. The change of use and the rendering of the walls are considered to be acceptable.

In summary, the proposed works would not impact on the significance of the world heritage site. However, there are opportunities within the detail of the proposed works for enhancing the presentation of this non-designated heritage asset, for its owner and visitors.

I hope these comments can be considered when a decision is made concerning this development.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adrian Farmer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'r'.

**Adrian Farmer**

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