

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Mark Penford
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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13th June 2019

Dear Mark

AVA/2019/0265: Extension of workshop and construction of two storey office accommodation at TA JC Ball and Sons, JC Ball and Midland Industrial Estate, Midland Terrace, Ambergate.

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 site forms part of a larger industrial site that contains two grade II listed buildings whose significance relates to forming part of the North Midland railway, engineered by the eminent national railway engineer George Stephenson, with architectural design being the work of Francis Thompson: The Goods Shed at Ambergate Station to the rear of Midland Terrace, Station Road; and 6, 7, 8 and 9 Midland Terrace.

The tangible evidence of the influence of various modes of transport, in forming and developing the textile industry within the Derwent Valley, is part of the World Heritage Site’s significance, as expressed and defined in its Outstanding Universal Value.

The existing large industrial building is close to the listed buildings - a row of domestic railway cottages and a railway goods shed - alongside the railway line, and arguably already impacts on the historic setting of two listed buildings. However, it undoubtedly exists and as an industrial building is not entirely incongruous within a former area of railway land between a complex arrangement at the junction of various railway lines. The existing workshop building is a modern framed construction, with lightweight cladding, having a larger and contrasting scale to the loadbearing masonry constructed, vernacular buildings of 1840.

The proposed extension develops the north and west sides of the existing workshop building, closest to the listed buildings, with the same industrial scale, height and aesthetic of metal sheeting on a frame. This would further reduce the setting of the listed buildings and increase the overbearing impact on them, in a manner which could not be described as ‘subservient’.

By failing to preserve the setting of these buildings, as attributes that contribute to the significance of the World Heritage Site, it is considered that the proposed extension, in its current form, would be harmful to the significance of the World Heritage Site. This harm would be ‘less than substantial’ as defined by the revised NPPF (July 2018)

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, flowing style.

Adrian Farmer

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