

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Paul Wilson
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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22nd July 2019

Dear Paul

COND/2019/0092: Discharge of condition 2 of AVA/2016/0651 on land adjacent to 69 Derby 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 September.

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 proposed detached dwelling would be located within the Buffer Zone of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site in a gap site within a row of houses of various ages, styles, materials and relationship to Derby Road. The dominant materials are stone and brick, although the addition of render to the adjacent row has degraded the visual appearance of the buildings. The dominant character, however, is set by the coursed stone cottages, from the railway bridge to the application site, which have block sizes of approximately 225-250mm, with a dressed face.

Apart from the notional use of stone, the approved dwelling makes little reference to its context and is therefore likely to be read as an incongruous intervention. The introduction of a gable to the frontage would be an alien feature, within this context, where the ridges are parallel to the road, as would the cottage-style canopy. The discharge of conditions application proposed 140mm pitched face, Birchover stone of random lengths. This size and finish to the stonework is not represented in this immediate context. A defensible position might be a feature stone gable, using dressed stone, ideally to a minimum depth of 215mm with stone or brickwork for the main body of the house.

As a natural clay material, the roof tiles are acceptable. The detail and materials of the entrance door, door and window frames, canopy, eaves, verge and ridge details should be given appropriate level of consideration so as to respect local distinctiveness and avoid an overall impression of a dwelling that could be found anyway, rather than in a special place of international significance. The front boundary wall covered under condition 3 should also be informed by the local detail and character. Nevertheless, the significance of the World Heritage Site would not be harmed by the proposed materials were the proposals to be deemed acceptable in general planning terms.

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

Yours sincerely



Adrian Farmer

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