

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Helen Frith
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
Derbyshire **DE5 3BT**

25th July 2019

Dear Helen

AVA/2019/0145 & AVA/2019/0146: Repair of Aqueduct Cottage and its conversion into a visitors centre for the Lea Wood Nature Reserve.

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). 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 application has, more than adequately, met the requirements of paragraph 189 of the Revised NPPF (2018) in describing the significance of any heritage assets affected.

The proposed re-use is considered to be suitable and complementary to the visitor experience to the canal and the wider world heritage site, of which it is a significant component. The repair and reinstatement has been carefully and sympathetically considered within the framework of best conservation practice, in terms of authenticity, informed by evidence in the surviving fabric, historic documents and oral memory.

The Structural Condition Survey and associated repair recommendations related to the proposal to consolidate the structure of the cottage as a ruin, and as such do not include recommendations in connection with the re-use of the cottage. The application’s supporting outline schedule of works is generally acceptable, but we would suggest any approval be subject to detailed conditions from the council’s conservation officer.

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