

DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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

18th September 2019

Dear Heather

AVA/2019/0832: Replacement of existing shop frontage with new shop frontage at 52 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 later this month.

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 site is located within the Belper and Milford Conservation Area. The supporting Design and Access and Heritage Statement has demonstrated an understanding of the significance of the property and context, and has made an appropriate response in the proposed works.

The proposal involves changes to a prominent business property on the corner of Bridge Street and Field Lane. While the traditional design of its shopfront makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the locality, its detailing suggests that it may not be the original shopfront. Many of its components are also in poor condition.

The shopfront would be replaced with a traditionally styled shopfront, similar to the existing, but with revised detail to the pilaster capitals, a masonry stall-riser and slightly less sub-division to the shopfronts. While the current detail has a particular character, the replacement shopfront would also be acceptable, if correctly implemented.

In conclusion, it is considered that the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site would not be harmed as a result of the proposed works. However, the details of the replacement shopfront should be to the satisfaction of Amber valley Borough Council’s Conservation Officer, to ensure that its design quality is to an appropriate standard for this area of high heritage value, with particular regard for authenticity and integrity.

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', written in a cursive style.

Adrian Farmer

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