

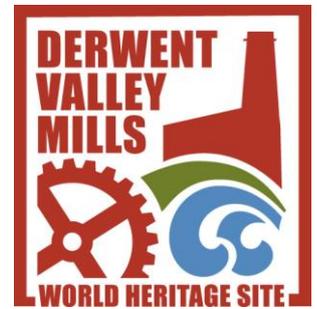
DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Tim Braund
Director of Regulatory Services
Derbyshire Dales District Council
Town Hall
Matlock DE4 3NN

22nd March 2022

Dear Tim

19/00712/FUL: Erection of five industrial and commercial buildings with associated new access and landscaping at Blackrocks Business Park, Porter Lane, Wirksworth.

In July 2019, the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) Partnership provided a response to the consultation concerning the above application. That response set out the Partnership's concerns that, as the site forms part of the World Heritage Site's arrested rural landscape setting, as a relatively unaltered green field, development would negatively impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Site. The site is surrounded by many historic built features such as the Cromford and High Peak Railway, lime-kilns, field barns, etc., which contribute positively to the immediate setting of the WHS.

Nevertheless, Derbyshire Dales District Council has granted permission for this development and works have started on site. These works have been brought to the attention of the DVMWHS Partnership's Coordination Team.

It is accepted that this permission was granted during the lifetime of a previous Management Plan for the DVMWHS, which was not as clear as to how planning authorities should proceed if they decide to set aside the Partnership's concerns over negative impacts on the World Heritage Site's Outstanding Universal Value. Since then, the 2020-25 Management Plan (<https://managementplan.derwentvalleymills.org/>) has set out a Statement of Planning Procedure for Development Management (<https://managementplan.derwentvalleymills.org/part-three/20-statement-of-planning-procedure-for-development-management/>) which specifically sets out in Section 20.7 what a local planning authority should do if it is minded to approve an application that has been highlighted by Historic England and/or the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Partnership as likely to negatively impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site. As set out within Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2017), the planning authority and the DVMWHS Partnership should inform Alexandra Warr (alexandra.warr@historicengland.org.uk), Historic England's Head of International Strategy and Henry Reed (henry.reed@culture.gov.uk), Senior Heritage Policy Adviser at the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), at the earliest possible occasion, and they will decide whether to inform UNESCO's World Heritage Centre.

I'm writing to ensure that Derbyshire Dales District Council is clear of the necessary procedure if it is likely to be in this situation again. Since 2019, a number of DDDC planning officers and councillors have received training from the DVMWHS Partnership about these procedures, and a video highlighting the key points of that training is available at <https://youtu.be/wLxYCLCwKqA>. Hopefully that training has helped decision makers to better understand the need to protect and conserve the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, whenever possible.

If you feel a meeting would be helpful, to explore why the application on Porter Lane was granted, I'd be happy to set up a Microsoft Teams meeting, to include Adam Lathbury, Chair of the DVMWHS Conservation and Planning Group.

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'.

Adrian Farmer

Heritage Co-ordinator, Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site.

cc Dr Mark Askey, DDDC