DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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12th August 2020

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

Dear Heather

AVA/2020/0476: Single storey side extension and separate first floor gable extension at The Studio, 57A Chapel Street, Belper.

Please find below my response to the consultation concerning the above application. These comments will be passed to the World Heritage Site Conservation and Planning Group 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 maintain the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site by protecting, conserving, presenting, enhancing and transmitting its culture, economy, unique heritage and landscape 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 2020. It has as the first of its nine aims to: "protect and conserve the Outstanding Universal Value of the DVMWHS to ensure its transmission to future generations." In accordance with this aim, and with reference to the operational guidance in Section 20 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 is also within the Belper and Milford Conservation Area. The application involves two relatively small extensions to the relatively contained north and west elevations of a modern dwelling, which replaced an unattractive dance studio. Visible from New Road, the drawings fail to show the photovoltaic panels on the visible roof slopes, which together with the numerous rooflights, present less than an ideal roofscape. However, the proposed extensions would themselves have less visual impact and are not considered to adversely impact on the significance of the WHS, as defined by its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

The setting of the grade II* listed De Bradelei Mills would be a material consideration, given that it makes a contribution to the significance of the WHS. However, as the dwelling is set wholly behind the Chapel Street frontages, with only glimpse views between existing buildings, it is considered that there would be little impact on the setting of that WHS element and consequently there would be no harm to its OUV arising from the proposed works.

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

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

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