DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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26th August 2020

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

Dear Heather

AVA/2020/0644: Repair of boundary wall, laying of block paving driveway and works to boundary with highway at 3 Chevin Road, Milford.

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 in November.

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:

No 3 Chevin Road is an unlisted building, also located within the Belper and Milford Conservation Area. It occupies a prominent location with respect to elements contributing to the attributes of the WHS and the public's experience of the Milford Mills site, from this viewpoint.

The proposed works are for the re-building of a low masonry wall, which in itself is of little significance. However, its re-building would potentially affect the appearance of the WHS and the conservation area, so its re-building, on a like-for-like basis, is appropriate, certainly more so than the applicant's preferred fencing. Indeed, replacement of the inner leaf of concrete blocks for natural stone would be preferable, but not reasonable to insist on, in this situation. The replacement surfacing of the drive is not the preferred material, either, compared to natural materials used elsewhere in the settlement, but the small unit paving would not be unacceptable subject to its colour being restrained and recessive.

In summary, it is considered that the proposed works would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the WHS, and hence its significance, as defined by its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

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

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

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

cc Sarah Brooks, AVBC