DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Sarah Pearce
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
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18th September 2020

Dear Sarah

AVA/2020/0694: Proposed temporary agricultural worker's dwelling, comprising static/chalet style bungalow, at Wyver View, Whitewells Lane, 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 in November.

The site lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) Buffer Zone. 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 application site is located only 250 metres from the WHS boundary. Whitewells Farm to the north of the site is the only historic farm within this group and is presumed to be separate to the farming operations at Wyver View. The small scale of the 'farm', at this site, is explained in the Agricultural Appraisal and Planning Statement, with it operating as a centre for other sites located around the county. Reference to the mixture of modern and traditional buildings within the farmstead is confusing, as the group is essentially a relatively modern arrangement, with the separate dwelling of Beggars Oak sited between Wyver View and its agricultural sheds.

The proposed development includes a temporary, single storey prefabricated 'chalet style/static caravan' dwelling, to the rear of what is referred to as the farmhouse. The proposed location is on a site occupied by lightweight sheet-covered structures, which would presumably be displaced by the proposed dwelling.

Should the agricultural/functional need for the dwelling be accepted, its impact on the WHS's relict 18th century rural landscape setting would be limited, it is considered, but not without impact. The visual impact of the proposed dwelling has been somewhat played-down in the application, given its proximity on the edge of this small group of buildings, adjacent to open landscape, on land rising from the river valley. Views may be possible from the nearby bridleway (AV4/24/2) and oblique views from Whitewells Lane itself, where the polytunnels are visible.

In terms of describing the proposals, the specific appearance of the development would appear to have been avoided by claiming that the design is outside the applicant's control. The appearance of the proposed dwelling relies solely on assurances that it has been chosen to best-suit the proposed location, and satisfy the principles for minimising visual or other impacts. However, unlike the timber-clad dwelling in one of the application documents, the image submitted shows an example of a prefabricated dwelling with a light-coloured render, which would be highly prominent within an open landscape setting.

The proposed dwelling is proposed to be finished with 'mapei' render to all sides; the roof would be clad with a lightweight, imprinted metal tile effect sheeting (Corotile), with a painted timber fascia.

AVBC Local Plan Policy EN29 requires that:

> *Within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site as shown on the Proposals Map, the Borough Council will require all development proposals to preserve or enhance its character and appearance;*
> *Within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Buffer Zone, as shown on the Proposals Map, the Borough Council will require all development proposals to preserve or enhance the setting of the World Heritage Site, including views into and out of the site;*

In considering proposals, the Borough Council will have regard to the aims and objectives of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Management Plan

In summary, the proposed temporary dwelling would be acceptable, in principle, forming part of this relatively contained group. However, the insertion of a light coloured domestic building within this context would not preserve or enhance the setting of the WHS, as required by Policy EN29. While this type of structure would be unlikely to meet the design quality expected for a permanent structure, by reference to the Design Rationale in the WHS Management Plan, 2020-2025, the impact of its presence for its allotted duration would be mitigated were its finish to be more recessive. Accordingly, it is recommended that, a darker recessive finish be required of the structure, in order to reduce its visual impact on the open agricultural landscape, for the duration of its presence. Similar considerations should apply to the proposed roof finish, which is proposed to be 'Corotile' tile effect sheeting, and which is available in charcoal grey.

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