Heritage Impact Assessment - AVA/2026/0004

Arched Stone Structures and Ice House to the rear of No 34A Lodge Drive

The application relates specifically to the arched structures, not the ice house, but all are listed Grade II under List Entry No. 1419077.

The listing gives the history of the site as follows:

The ice house and vaulted cellars were built as service facilities for Bridge Hill House, completed in 1793 for George Benson Strutt, one of the sons of Jedediah Strutt, founder of the Belper textile mills, industrialist and entrepreneur. The house was demolished in 1938, and the landholding re-developed for housing.

Its importance is summarised as follows:

The ensemble of vaulted storage cellars or chambers and ice house to the rear of No.34a Lodge Drive, Belper, was associated with the development of Bridge Hill House in 1793 and is of special interest in a national context both for its architectural quality and for its historical association with the nationally-significant Strutt family industrial dynasty of the Derwent Valley in Derbyshire. It is an extremely well preserved, capacious and carefully detailed structure, which unusually combines different kinds of storage facilities in a single unit and which characterises the ways of storing and preserving foodstuffs prior to the introduction of refrigeration and canning.

Location

The application site is within the Buffer Zone of the UNESCO-designated Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. Paragraph 103 of UNESCO's Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention gives the following description for Buffer Zones:

Wherever necessary for the proper protection of the property, an adequate buffer zone should be provided. For the purposes of effective protection of the nominated property, a buffer zone is an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the property. This should include the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection.

The arches and ice house are Elements of Attributes of the World Heritage Site. Attributes are explained in the Management Plan for the Derwent Valley Mills WHS (Section 3) as follows:

For effective protection and management it is necessary not only to have the overarching Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, but also to define the attributes of OUV which individually and collectively comprise OUV. For example having clearly defined attributes enables the impact of proposed changes within a WHS and its setting to be assessed against individual attributes as well as OUV as a whole.

The Bridge Hill Ice House and other structures, Bridge Hill, Belper (attribute 2, new way of life) are named as Elements of Attributes which fall outside the World Heritage Site, in the current version of the DVMWHS Management Plan.

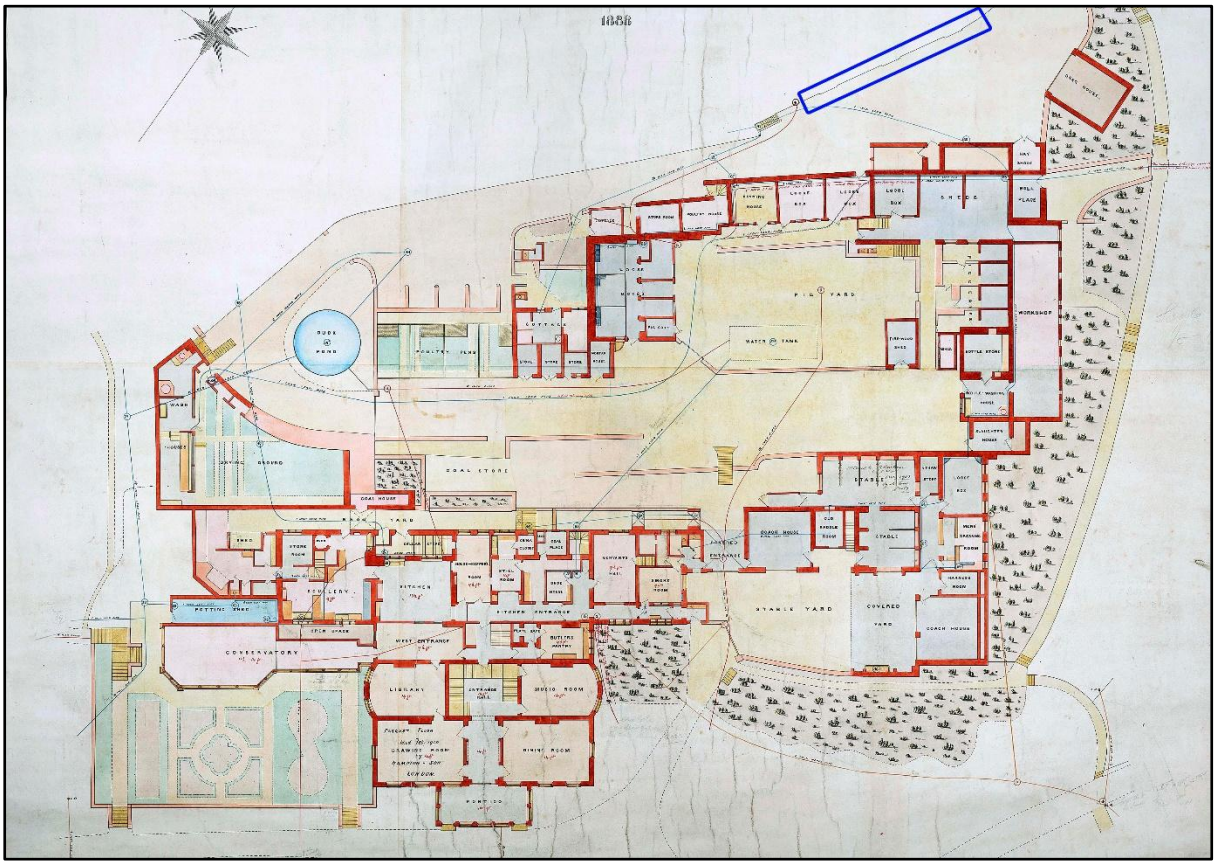
Therefore, the proposed work has been carefully planned to ensure the best possible outcome in sympathetically restoring and protecting these important structures to ensure their 'transmission to future generations' and meet the requirements for appropriate care of Listed structures.



The Bridge Hill House site, including farm buildings at the rear, already established at the time of the earliest Strutt Estate Plan compiled in 1805 (D1564 3, Derbyshire Record Office)



An 1888 plan of the Bridge Hill Estate carried out by Maurice Hunter in 1888 for George Henry Strutt, the then owner. (D1564-46, Derbyshire Record Office)



An 1888 plan of Bridge Hill House and associated buildings, carried out by Maurice Hunter in 1888 for George Henry Strutt, the then owner. This has been annotated to show the location of the ice house and arches with the entrances boxed in blue. (D1564-44, Derbyshire Record Office).



There are only two images of the yards behind Bridge Hill House, and only this one (c.1900) shows the tall buildings at the rear (on the far left) which obscured any view of the arches from the main house (not pictured, to the right). (Belper Historical Society)

All work planned is to restore and protect the structure, namely:

1. **Doors** – Existing doors to arches 2 and 3 are shown below. The proposal is to refurbish/renew in the same form of construction of tongue and groove exterior over a timber frame and hung on steel hook and band style hinges. The existing hinges will be reused where serviceable, to ensure as little fabric is lost as possible.
   These doors will be painted 'Strutt' green (BS 14 C 40), the colour established for Belper heritage properties following the restoration of 17 Long Row by the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust in 1984, to recognise their historical links to the Strutt family who commissioned their construction, together with the ice house in the 1790s.
   Please note arch 1 (to the Ice House) is open with no timber doors.




2. **Pointing** of façade walls with traditional lime mortar where the joints are open and mortar has been lost. Typical examples of areas of lost mortar shown below.



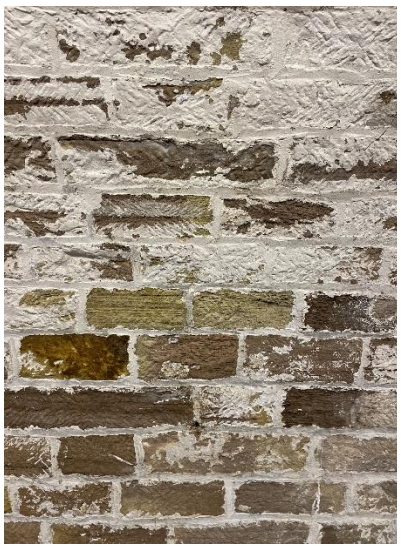

3. **Reconnection of drainage** - to prevent further loss of mortar and to minimise water build up behind the stone façade that with freeze thaw action will damage and distort the stone façade over time. The two photos on the next page show the issue. New down pipes will provide a positive connection between the drainage openings in the façade and the functioning ground drainage below, thus stopping water running from the joints and over the face of the stonework. Where present the downpipes will be secured by driving timber plugs into the existing holes in the stonework, where downpipes have historically been in place, and attaching brackets into them. This reduces the need to drill new holes into the stone and remains true to the original method of fixing.





4. Reapply lime white wash to the intrados of each arch barrel

Below are examples of the intrados of the arch barrels. The inside of each arch (intrados and end walls) has been painted with line wash historically but this hasn't been renewed for several decades so the loose material will be brushed off providing a suitable substrate to receive the traditional lime wash that will be reapplied.





Conclusion

All these works relate to essential maintenance needed to prevent further deterioration of this Listed site through weathering, poor water management and lack of maintenance. They do not represent harm at any level to these World Heritage Elements, and we hope Amber Valley Borough Council, as the planning authority, can approve these proposals to ensure the structures' protection and restoration, not just as a Listed property but also ensuring they continue to contribute to the World Heritage Site's Outstanding Universal Value.

Dave Butterworth