DERWENT VALLEY MILLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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3rd February 2026

Katja Graham
Amber Valley Borough Council
Town Hall
Ripley
Derbyshire DE5 3BT

Dear Katja,

AVA/2025/0813: Proposed first floor extension to existing dwelling at Archways, Lodge Drive, Belper.

Please find below a Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Partnership response to the consultation concerning the above application. These comments will be taken to the next meeting of the World Heritage Site Conservation and Planning Group later this month for verification.

The site lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) Buffer Zone, close to the World Heritage Site boundary. 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 give the following advice:

The application site sits entirely within the DVMWHS Buffer Zone. A buffer zone is an area surrounding a World Heritage Site which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development.

Adjacent to the proposed development are arches that formed part of the now-demolished Bridge Hill House's curtilage, and therefore can be considered as an Element of an Attribute that manifest the Values that cumulatively form the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site. The setting of these structures has already been compromised by the 20th century development that took place in the grounds of Bridge Hill House prior to the inscription of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site in 2002. It is important that the planning authority appropriately considers whether the proposal significantly worsens the setting of these Elements.

You may be aware that UNESCO has requested that where an application may impact on the Outstanding Universal value of the World Heritage Site, that it is supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with its toolkit (https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/).

The DVMWHS Partnership does not object in principle to the extension to the existing house, however the planning authority needs to be assured by its own conservation advisor that the proposals do not negatively impact on the setting of the arches, and therefore the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

Yours sincerely



Adam Lathbury

Head of the Conservation, Heritage and Design Service for Derbyshire County Council

With responsibility for management of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Coordination Team.