

Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Partnership Closing Statement



World Heritage Sites are places of global significance. They are recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) through the World Heritage Convention, which has been ratified by all 193 member states of the United Nations¹, including HM Government.

World Heritage Sites are heritage assets with Outstanding Universal Value, of such significance that they merit protection for the whole of humankind.

In the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) World Heritage Sites are identified as heritage assets of the highest significance.

It is the DVMWHS Partnership's understanding that there is a consensus of all parties to this inquiry that the proposals included within the Haytop Country Park planning applications represent *less than substantial harm*. While we acknowledge this term is understood, for clarity, less than substantial harm does not mean no harm.

The Partnership agrees with the comments made by Ms Morris, in examination, that Mr Copp's heritage impact assessment - relating to the impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site - was not proportionate to the significance of a World Heritage Site, nor did it appropriately analyse the visual, setting and physical impacts of the proposals on the widely recognised (including by UNESCO) elements and attributes. These elements and attributes are, in the case of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, the physical manifestation of its Outstanding Universal Value – the reason for which it is included on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

In comparison with Mr Copp's heritage impact assessment, Ms Morris's Appendix 3 to her proof of evidence provided a more appropriately thorough review of documentary evidence, suitable for a heritage asset of such high significance.

While it is a point of fact there are two planning permissions for this site, one granted in 1952 and the other in 1966, both of these significantly pre-date the December 2001 inscription of the Derwent Valley Mills onto UNESCO's World Heritage List.

If these applications had been considered post inscription, the DVMWHS Partnership does not believe they would have been granted permission. This would be seen as an unacceptable imposition on the rural relict landscape.

The DVMWHS Partnership believes that the development and change of single static caravan plots to double pile residential bungalow-type units represents an unacceptable intensification and urbanisation of this site.

¹ As of 31st January 2017.

It is difficult to envisage a situation where the appellants' expert witness, Mr Laister, would have been so able to distinguish as clearly between double pile static caravans and permanent buildings as he did between historic static caravans and touring caravans from the historic aerial photographs.

Nevertheless, the vernacular of older static caravans shares many characteristics with touring caravans being only slightly larger and more rectilinear. To a lay audience, the historic statics and tourers are probably what is envisaged in the mind's eye when referring to a caravan park. The double pile bungalow-type units represent development that would intensify use of this site which the Partnership believes would have an unacceptable impact on an attribute of the World Heritage Site, and its setting.

The photographs of the works, which include gabion walls, concrete kerb-lined Tarmac roadways and domestically paved individual driveways, within the appendices of Philip Thompson speak for themselves.

From Ms Morris's map regression in appendix 3 of her proof of evidence, it is clear that the Haytop application site has been wooded since at least the earliest mapping records. It could also be surmised from Ms Morris's evidence that these existing trees were exploited in the picturesque composition of Alderwasley Hall's parkland setting. This woodland setting may have been eroded, to a certain degree, through the 1952 and 1966 planning permissions, however it is not until the current owners' activity that the development and urbanising interventions have begun to seriously impact on this wooded hillside character. As clearly documented in the table of attributes and elements on page 14 of the DVMWHS Management Plan 2020-2025, ancient woodland, designed landscapes and tree plantations are elements which contribute to Attribute 5: *A 'relict' industrial landscape, where the 18th and early 19th century industrial development may still be seen in an 18th/19th century agricultural landscape, containing evidence of other early industrial activity.*

The intrusive and extensive urbanising works to this site clearly impact on a documented attribute of the DVMWHS, which is recognised by UNESCO. As identified in paragraphs 103 and 104 of the UNESCO Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (2019) attributes spill out of the World Heritage Site into the Buffer Zone. This is especially the case for sites in the Buffer Zone that abut the World Heritage Site.

In addition to directly impacting on an attribute of the World Heritage Site, it also impacts on the setting of other World Heritage attributes within the World Heritage Site boundary. This includes the A6 (former turnpike) road, the River Derwent and the Cromford Canal.

Much has been made in the inquiry of the photographs of the site, particularly from the A6 road and the Cromford Canal. However, these are static views into the Haytop site. These elements of the World Heritage Site, which are linear in nature, run in parallel past the Haytop site. Views from these elements are sequential and change in different lighting conditions and times of the day and year. Static views do not appropriately capture the impacts of the Haytop site as part of that sequential experience.

Both the A6 and the canal – and the railway – are elements that manifest the insertion of the factory system into the Derwent Valley. Development on the Haytop site has the potential to negatively impact on their setting.

In short, there are views from elements of Attribute 4, across an element of Attribute 1, to an element of Attribute 5.

It is clear that this site cannot be seen from the entirety of the 24km length of the World Heritage Site. However, it can be seen from established elements of attributes that manifest the Outstanding Universal Value of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. As Inspector Ball makes clear in paragraph 141 of his final judgement on the Bullsmoor Appeal: *‘The site represents a fairly small part of the overall setting of the WHS in the Derwent valley. The appellants argue that the loss of a relatively small site, in itself, would not seriously jeopardise the significance of the WHS as a whole. However, the degree of local harm identified above should not be underestimated. Such reasoning could be used to justify similar proposals elsewhere in the buffer zone, and a proliferation of similar, relatively minor schemes throughout the WHS could, on a cumulative basis, result in very significant harm to the relict landscape setting of the WHS.’*²

As well as the setting of individual elements of attributes, there is the wider setting of the World Heritage Site as a whole. Again, from the viewpoints included in Ms Morris’s Appendix 3, it is clear that the site, particularly from elevated views, is visible when approaching the World Heritage Site. The incongruity of the urbanised development on the site dilutes the appreciation of the rural setting.

To understand the magnitude of the impact on the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, you need to consider the UNESCO World Heritage Committee’s reason for inscribing the Site - that *‘in the Derwent Valley for the first time there was large-scale industrial production in a **hitherto rural landscape**.’* In addition to this, as identified by Inspector Ball in the Bullsmoor inquiry (paragraph 75): “While this might be identified in Framework terms as ‘less than substantial harm’, UNESCO considers that any harm to the OUV of a WHS is unacceptable and will judge that loss accordingly. The cumulative effect of small losses to the surviving ‘relict’ landscape poses one of the most significant threats to the OUV of the Derwent Valley Mills WHS and could lead to the site being placed on UNESCO’s World Heritage in Danger List or even to deletion from the World Heritage List.”

Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework states: *Any harm [including less than substantial] to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), **should require clear and convincing justification.***

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² Appeal A Ref: APP/M1005/W/17/3183493. Appeal B Ref: APP/M1005/V/18/3194115. Land at Bullsmoor, off Nottingham Road, Belper DE56 1JS. Decision date: 11 October 2018. Included as an appendix in Adam Lathbury’s Proof of Evidence.