

**CAUDWELL'S MILL
ROWSLEY
DERBYSHIRE**

**REPORT
Gary Emmerson**

May 1978

Report concerning visit to Caudwell's Mill, Rowsley, Peak District National Park

by Gary Emmerson

1. **Introduction.** At the request of Peter Downing of D.A.R.T., I visited Caudwell's Mill on Thursday, 18th May 1978, in the company of Mr. Clive Prior, with a view to considering, first, the industrial archaeological significance of the site; and, second (if the site appeared significant), options for preservation of the buildings and their contents with provisional costings for these options where possible.

2. **Significance of the site.** It was clear that expert advice on this matter had already been sought. My own opinion echoes those earlier opinions for, although the mill is archaeologically recent, its rarity is certain and it has great value, both as a visible portion of the interface between 'ancient' milling processes and present-day mechanised milling; and as a complex, well preserved working relic of late Victorian workmanship and ingenuity. Considering the policies of the Millers Mutual society, it further seems that the mill's rarity value is likely to increase in the future. In short, the site would appear to be a worthy candidate for long-term preservation.

3. **Options for preservation.** I have herein considered a number of the more likely options and, where possible, have included comments about suitability and the possible problems and costs of the various courses of action. I would stress, however, that the views recorded were formed on the basis of one short visit only, so that these notes should not be regarded as a complete feasibility study. I have assumed that, for options A, B and C, basic administration (wages, records etc.) will be centred, and costs absorbed, elsewhere.

Option A. Preservation and no display of mill to visitors.

This possibility is a sterile one and is likely also to be as expensive as allowing limited visitor access, with costs similar to Option B but without an income. I have assumed, of course, that there is no economic future for the mill as a working mill in its own right, although specialist advice could usefully be obtained to ascertain accurately how much of the mill's running costs could be defrayed by milling cattle feedstuffs.

Option B. Preservation and limited visitor access.

Staffing: this option would involve staffing the mill with one experienced man charged with maintaining the buildings and machinery on, say, two fixed days a week during the visitor season (March to October?), while acting as guide to pre-booked coach parties on the other three days. Off-season, a greater proportion of time could be devoted to maintenance, allowing more extensive overhauling etc. During the visitor season, provision of a sum to allow for regular toilet cleaning would be essential.

Visitors: strictly by appointment and by coach only in view of limited parking - three coaches at any one time parking in yard when the existing decaying wooden garage is removed. Maximum theoretical throughput would be say:

60 visitors per hour, based on $\frac{3}{4}$ -hour tours

thus, 360 visitors per 6-hour average visitor day.
 Based on 100 visitor-day season (say 33 weeks @ 3 days).
 Maximum throughput = 100 x 360 = 36,000 visitors.

But a more realistic figure of actual throughput would probably be
 15,000 to 20,000, depending on marketing arrangements.

Marketing: I would advise production of a simple brochure for distribution solely to all schools within a sensible area (usually distributed free by the Education service mail network if Education Officer's agreement is obtained) and other organisations and institutions, e.g. church groups, Women's Institute, Workers Educational Association, universities, technical colleges etc. As far as possible, distribution should be in batches to head offices in order to cut costs; but a support group of volunteers could help out here.

Income/costs:	£	£
Income based on 15,000 visitors @ average 20p per head (40p adults, 20p children)	3,000	3,000
Costs: salary and wages, on costs, Warden/Miller	3,200	
Cleaner (seasonal only)	300	
Maintenance,/Insurance/Fuel/Telephone	2,000	
Printing/distribution costs, marketing	500	6,000
Shortfall = (£3,000)		

However, as the mill will need to work, some of this may be offset by foodstuff sales.

Capital expenditure : provision of toilets would be the only major expenditure other than the cost of installing less steep stairs for safe descent from the upper floors; and for arranging for certain items of machinery to be clearly displayed e.g. one set of rollers.

Toilet provision would need minimum:

Male toilets two urinals, one cubicle, one mirror, one washbasin, paper towel
 holder, waste bin

Ladies toilets three cubicles, two washbasins, two mirrors, two paper towel
 holders, two waste bins (open), the use of a hygiene agency for

collection of disposables is recommended.

Grant-aid should be readily available from a number of sources.

Option C. Similar to Option B in most respects but with the addition of a shop selling limited gift and publication selection, a limited range of sweets and minerals and possibly flour (?). This would provide another source of income which is likely to amount to about a further £3,000 per annum, or a £1,000 net extra (given 15,000 visitors). However, against this must be set the problems of increased administration difficulties; possible V.A.T. problems affecting all income; accounting and bill payments.

Staffing/shop siting: staffing of the shop would be by the Warden/Miller, allowing 15 minutes or so at the end of each tour for purchasing. Ideally, visitors should exit through the shop area, so some ground floor siting in the mill would perhaps be suggested.

The addition of an Assistant Warden/Miller would obviously greatly assist and would probably allow greater throughput of visitors and more time for them to spend in the shop, as well as providing sickness cover and ensuring continuance of the milling/mill-maintenance skills (particularly if a youngish person is selected).

Income/costs/capital expenditure: very likely the Assistant Warden/Miller's wage cost of approximately £3,000 per annum could be absorbed by extra income generated, producing a similar deficit to Option B, particularly if the visitor week was extended to four days. Capital expenditure would be as Option B.

Option D. Visitor centre for general public.

Although personally I consider that the problems of access and parking militate against a more extensive operation which allows access to the public at large, I do nevertheless include notes on this option, if only to put forward the major difficulties for discussion.

Staffing: variable depending on the scale of operation and opening days/hours and services provided; but certainly a minimum staff would include:

Five-day opening:

Full-time staff	Warden/Miller
	Two Assistant Warden/Millers
	Shop assistant (seasonal)

Part-time staff	Cleaner (seasonal)
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Seven-day opening:

As five-day, but with another Assistant Warden/Miller acting as a guide and an extra part-time shop assistant.

Visitors: possible throughput is largely a function of two variables - number of guides and size of car park. A further variable, marketing efficiency and expenditure, will clearly influence numbers attracted but, even on five-days a week, it would probably be possible to attract 40,000 or so visitors in a season.

Marketing: costs would increase considerably on Options B and C in order to attract from the more diffuse general public market. Newspaper advertising, poster distribution would be required in addition to contacting organisations as in B and C.

Income/costs:	£	£
Income - visitor income based on 40,000 visitors @ average 30p per head (due to a higher proportion of adults)	12,000	
Shop income average 30p per head	12,000	24,000
Costs - salaries (including on costs):		
Warden/Miller	3,200	
2 Assistant Warden/Millers, full-time	6,400	
cleaner (seasonal)	500	
Shop assistant (seasonal)	1,600	
Maintenance/Insurance/Fuel/Telephone	3,200	
Marketing: printing/advertising/poster distribution/ticket printing etc.	3,000	
Shop purchases	8,000	25,700

Shortfall = (£2,700) although, again, some of this may be offset by sale of foodstuffs.

Capital expenditure: this is a major element in this option. Providing car park, access road and footpaths could, excluding purchase of land, be in the order of £10,000. To accommodate a mixture of private cars and coaches, an area of two to three acres of hardstanding would be required, with a grassed overflow area of up to two acres for peak periods.

Toilets would need to be slightly larger than Options B or C; litter bins would be an added expense.

Insurance company and fire authority might require the addition of an outside fire escape - this should be ascertained.

Problems: the major problems would be access from the main road; and siting of car park. Access is perhaps the biggest problem, almost certainly requiring visitors to approach via the side road leading through the centre of Rowsley village. Considerable opposition on the grounds of intrusion, endangering the safety of schoolchildren etc. is likely; and inhabitants of cottages within the immediate mill area are likely to object to the greater number of people around.

Car-park siting is difficult - a site remote from the mill is likely in view of the need to build an expensive bridge over the main leat to gain access to the 'island' of land adjacent to the

mill. The acquisition of suitable land will be expensive and may be difficult; planning permissions would need to be sought.

Management of a larger complex will be more difficult and basic administration may need to be centred at the mill, with the cost of a part-time bookkeeper/wages clerk-and auditing costs possibly being added to the schedule of costs and adding a further £1,000 to the deficit.

Erosion caused by 40,000 visitors walking through a wooden-floored building could become a problem, increasing maintenance costs.

4. Conclusions. Of the various options, the simpler ones A, B and C are most attractive, although A is more negative and, in the long term, Options B and C are likely to prove more fruitful.

Option D is a simple visitor centre which lacks advanced interpretation facilities and amenities like picnic parks but even then it is clear that the problems involved should not be regarded lightly. A more detailed study would provide more solid decision-making information and, if a development similar to Option D is considered, such a study should be regarded as essential.

Of the various possibilities discussed, Option C is perhaps the most attractive - enabling the mill to be preserved whilst ensuring continuation of necessary skills; but it seems clear that a continuing shortfall between income and expenditure would need to be financed from some outside source - possibly by local authority grants.

The assistance of bodies like the Area Museum Council, Countryside Commission and perhaps even the Peak District National Park Planning Board could usefully be sought.