

The Shears Inn is a historically valuable building. Built in 1773 (ie nearly 250 years old), it was where croppers met, secretly swore the Luddite Oath and planned their attempts to stop mechanisation destroying their jobs. It is the only building in Kirklees left standing as witness to the Luddites' meetings. It is therefore a key asset in the history of the West Yorkshire textile industry and contributes to the character of the place and to Kirklees Council's' heritage. As such the Council has a duty to prevent its destruction under its own policy PLP35. This policy echoes the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), chapter 12 on "Conserving and Enhancing the historic Environment".

There are alternatives to demolition which have not been pursued, eg. selling as a going concern. Change of use to a private dwelling would remove the public's ability to access the building but even this would be preferable to demolition, so long as historic markers such as the plaque by the entrance and in the pavement outside were retained.

The Council chooses not to hold a Register of Local Historical Assets. Other Councils do, and buildings like The Shears are registered. The Council should not use this deficit to decide that The Shears can be demolished. The Council has recognised The Shears' historical significance by including it in Council heritage publications and by funding other organisation's publications eg. The Luddite Trail in Spen Valley by _____, which is promoted in Council Libraries and at Tolson Museum.

NPPF paragraph 135 specifically requires the Council to take the historical significance of assets like The Shears into account when making decisions on planning applications.

The Shears Inn is a Registered Asset of Community Value therefore the Council has a duty under its own policy PLP48 to protect it and prevent destruction. Potentially this building could use its historic connections to be a successful high quality business.

Lastly, The Shears Inn is not falling down - structurally it does not need to be demolished. It is environmentally unsound to demolish buildings unnecessarily. In these circumstances The Shears building should be retained.

Please refuse this planning application.