

From:

Sent: 27 May 2019 16:35

To:

Subject: Planning Application 2019/91239 Demolition of The Shears Inn

Dear

On behalf of _____ I hand-delivered to Civic Centre 3 an objection in respect of the above planning application on Thursday 23rd May. In case it will assist, here attached is an electronic version of the document, which may be easier to redact/upload etc.

Kind Regards,

Planning Application Ref 2019/91239: Objection by

Application 2019/91239 seeks consent to demolish The Shears Inn at Halifax Road Liversedge, and build 4 dwellings on the site of the pub and its adjoining car park. objects to the proposal for the following reasons.

1. Kirklees Council's Local Plan Policy PLP35 states: *"Proposals should retain those elements of the historic environment which contribute to the distinct identity of the Kirklees area, and ensure they are appropriately conserved, to the extent warranted by their significance, also having regard to the wider benefits of the development. Consideration should be given to the need toc) secure a sustainable future for heritage assets at risk and **those associated with the local textile industry**".* The Shears Inn is an eighteenth-century building in which historic events were planned by textile workers in an uprising that marked the beginning of the organised trade union movement.
2. It is not possible within Kirklees to have a designated local heritage asset, because the Council (unlike many other Local Authorities in the country), chooses not to operate such a register. If it did, The Shears Inn would certainly be included due to its local and national significance relating to the Luddite Uprisings of 1812. For those not familiar with this history, the following paragraphs 3-11 will explain why The Shears Inn is historically so important.
3. A date-stone above the door shows The Shears was built in 1773. It is near the stocks (Listed as Scheduled Monuments), close to the historic centre of Liversedge, which was the most prominent settlement in the Spen Valley until the Industrial Revolution. It stands on Halifax Road, an ancient highway and in 1812 a well-used packhorse route.
4. Textile production was the most important economic activity in Spen Valley until the nineteenth century. Wool was spun and woven mostly at home. It was then "cropped" ie the nap was raised and skilfully snipped by croppers wielding four-foot shears, until the surface was completely smooth. Cropping was a well-paid job carried out in workshops employing up to six men, until their jobs became extinct due to mechanisation. After cropping, cloth was taken by packhorse to the Piece Hall Halifax or the White Cloth Hall Leeds to be sold.
5. The Shears Inn is less than a mile from the sites of Jackson's Cropping Shop at Hightown crossroads and Cartwrights Mill at Rawfolds. At the time of the Luddite uprisings its landlord was James Lister and it was a favourite drinking place for croppers from Jacksons.
6. The Shears Inn is nationally and internationally recognised due to its role in hosting secret meetings of croppers in an upstairs room. There they swore an oath of secrecy and loyalty to become Luddites and plotted to break new machinery (shearing frames) that were destroying their livelihood. Two incidents known to have been planned at The Shears were:
 - ❖ February 1812 – an ambush on Hartshead Moor of 2 waggons carrying new shearing frames from Marsden Huddersfield to Rawfolds. The drivers were tied up and the machinery smashed.

- ❖ April 1812 – a mass night-time attack on Cartwrights Mill at Rawfolds. It was unsuccessful and resulted in the death of two Luddites from gunshot wounds and the hanging of five men at York in January 1813.
7. In Huddersfield, Luddites attacked machinery, tried to kill William Cartwright, and murdered millowner William Horsfall. The uprisings happened because the consequences of losing one's job were dire: starvation or the workhouse. By 1812, most working people were already starving due to wars with Napoleon and America, blockaded imports, sky-high bread prices, and unemployment, coinciding with several years of crop failures. The Luddites could not halt mechanisation: their jobs disappeared; and a total of 17 men in were hanged. Their widows and children were left destitute, shunned by all except the Quakers who visited them and recorded their dire situation.
 8. Whilst Luddites were meeting at The Shears Inn, the Rev, Patrick Brontë was the vicar at nearby Hartshead Church. On his marriage in 1812 he moved from Thornbush Farm Hightown to Clough House, 426 Halifax Road, a few hundred yards uphill from The Shears. He would have known the workers at Jacksons Cropping Shop. It is said he allowed 2 Luddites to be secretly buried in a corner of Hartshead churchyard. He told his daughter Charlotte about the Luddites. She described the plight of the croppers and the Luddite attack at Rawfolds in her novel "Shirley", published in 1849.
 9. Local historian Frank Peel researched the Luddites in Spen Valley. He interviewed witnesses and published his account in "The Rising of the Luddites" in 1880. Chapter 5 (12 pages) is devoted to The Shears Inn.
 10. In the 20th century The Shears Inn's historic significance was recognised in several ways:
 - ❖ it was included in The Spen Way Heritage Trail (devised by Cleckheaton Rotary Club)
 - ❖ Kirklees Council included Luddite exhibits at Red House Museum and Tolson Museum, and featured The Shears in council heritage leaflets
 - ❖ The Shears was featured in
 11. In the 21st century further heritage recognition occurred:
 - ❖ the 200th anniversary of the Luddite uprising was marked by the opening of a small park with a Luddite statue and an event at The Shears
 - ❖ historian Jim Summerscales (x6 great grandson of the 1812 landlord James Lister) created an historic map and presented it to the pub
 - ❖
 - ❖ In 2015 the Leader of Kirklees, Councillor David Sheard, opened the Luddite Trail, which includes The Shears Inn. Trail leaflets were funded by a grant from Kirklees Council. The Luddite Trail has been so popular that more leaflets had to be printed. Many people from within and outside Kirklees come to walk the trail and potentially use The Shears for refreshments.
 - ❖ Local Junior school pupils have visited The Shears as part of their local history curriculum.

- 12.** The Shears Inn is the only building still standing in the whole of Kirklees where Luddites met, and it is crucial to understanding the history and development of the local textile industry. Therefore policy PLP35 applies and the building should not be demolished: it should be retained.
- 13.** A second Kirklees Council Policy- PLP48 – in respect of health and supporting communities – is relevant to this planning application. PLP48 states: *“Proposals which involve the loss of valued community facilities such as shops, **public houses** and other facilities of value to the local community will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that any assets listed on a Community Asset Register have satisfied the requirements under the relevant legislation”*. The Shears Inn was included on Kirklees Council’s Register of Assets of Community Value on 27th April 2019, thus PLP48 must be applied. The planning application does not demonstrate that the legal requirements relating to Assets of Community Value have been met.
- 14.** _____ is not aware that any attempt has been made to sell The Shears Inn as a going concern, which the owner of a commercial business would normally do. Therefore the owner cannot demonstrate that there is no longer a need for the facility, or that its current use is no longer viable. Instead, the owner is proposing demolition and the building of 4 large detached houses – of which there is no shortage in the Liversedge area. In fact, the Liversedge area is economically capable of supporting pubs and restaurants that offer high quality food and drink, in an interesting well-maintained environment that is run by committed staff. Sadly, the quality and the service at the Shears have diminished in recent times. Given its historic associations it has the potential and location to be a successful enterprise.
- 15.** The Shears Inn is still in a good condition and is not in need of demolition for structural reasons. There is no benefit to the local community arising from its demolition, which will only increase local pollution levels during the process and result in further, unnecessary landfill. There is no case for the demolition of a building which does not need to be knocked down.
- 16.** Even if the applicant can demonstrate that The Shears Inn does not have a viable future as a public house, it still remains a viable housing unit in its own right. Successive generations of landlords and their families have lived there quite successfully. As two of the proposed dwellings would be built on the current car park, it would be possible to provide three dwellings via these two new builds and the retention of The Shears building with its important history.
- 17.** In conclusion, _____ opposes the demolition of The Shears Inn due to its importance as a historically significant building and as a Registered Asset of Community Value.

22nd May 2019