

From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
To: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
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Application Reference No. : SMD/2024/0527

Site Address: Cross Inn Ash Tree Road Hoftens Cross Cauldon Low Staffordshire ST10 3EX Stoke On Trent

Comments by: David WilliamsChurnet Valley Conservation Society

From:

High View

Stoke on Trent

ST10 2HN

Phone:

Email:

Submission: Objection

Comments: Re Site: Cross Inn Ash Tree Road Hoftens Cross Cauldon Low

CVCS wishes to register its objection to the above planning application.

Its objection to the proposed demolition of the Cross Inn is based on the following:-

1. As a conservation group we have been asked to investigate the application for the proposed demolition of the former Cross Inn at Cauldon Low as part of an ongoing development of the site and adjacent field into a large, static caravan site.

Our initial review of the issues raises a concern that the demolition of this historic building is not justifiable on the evidence put forward to date. There does not appear to have been any preliminary attempts to use the existing building or adapt it in any way for a change of use akin to the overall basis upon which the plans for site as a whole are being considered.

Given the longevity of the building on the footprint of the area for demolition and the known history of the composite building itself from historic records, it would seem likely that grounds for preservation of some or most of the architectural structure within the building or an adaptation of those parts that are feasible into an alternative building usage could and should be investigated before any demolition is permitted.

We would suggest that a specialist independent historical building survey is commissioned or required by the LPA, either by its conservation officer and / or by the County Archaeologist in order to establish the vernacular architectural merit of the building as a heritage asset.

Such a survey report would enable a potential restorative programme for preserving the building as whole, or those parts that could be integrated into a sympathetic renovation that would allow as much of the existing fabric to be kept and maintained so that it could be encompassed in a favourable design that would be in

keeping with its setting, and permit a future change of use for the building which is currently in a redundant state having in the past been a traditional focus in the local community as both a public house or inn, and former restaurant.

In putting forward such a proposal we would remind the LPA of its agreed policies for situations such as this one, that is to say ‘The Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy’, that has now been superseded by the ‘Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan’, which was adopted on the 9th September 2020, of which Policy DC 2 is applicable to the historic environment: namely that:

1. The Council will conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets, including their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of maintaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment.
2. Protection will be given to designated heritage assets and their settings and non- designated heritage assets as set out in the NPPF.
3. All applications likely to affect heritage assets will require the submission of a heritage statement, including a qualitative visual assessment where appropriate.
4. Where development is likely to affect archaeology, both designated and undesignated, the Council requires the submission of a desk-based assessment, and where appropriate, field surveys and trench evaluation by a qualified professional.
5. Where the loss of significance is unavoidable, recording should take place and this should be added to the Historic Environment Record as a minimum, held by Staffordshire County Council.
6. The Council will continue its proactive approach to heritage assets at risk and welcomes development proposals which would result in the sympathetic reuse of these assets in line with NPPF policy.
7. The Council will promote development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area and those interests of acknowledged importance through the use of Conservation Area Appraisals, Design Guidance and Statements, Archaeological Assessments, Characterisation Studies and Masterplanning.

By these measures the District Council recognises the importance and the diversity of the historic built environment and its contribution to the local distinctiveness of the Staffordshire Moorlands. As part of its cultural heritage the historic built environment merits protection.

Staffordshire Moorlands has a wealth of listed buildings, scheduled archaeological sites (scheduled ancient monuments) and historic parks and gardens. These are of recognised national importance and are designated by English Heritage. Consequently these sites benefit from special consideration and protection through the planning system. In Heritage Protection for the 21st Century the Government has published proposals for the reform of the present system.

Conservation Areas are also designated by the local authority and enjoy additional protection and consideration. It is not intended to add buildings or sites in

Conservation Areas or any of the nationally designated sites (1.3 above) to the Local Heritage Register as their status is already recognised.

However, there are a number of buildings and structures, parks and gardens and archaeological sites, which are not of national importance, and which lie outside of Conservation Areas. These contribute significantly to the rich cultural heritage of the Moorlands. These deserve recognition and appropriate consideration by the Council.

In cases where the building in question is not already entered onto the Local Heritage Register and thus there are no additional planning controls on the building(s), the Council will ensure that when planning permission is required for alterations or redevelopment, the local interest of a building or site will be a material consideration in determining an application.

Proposals for demolition will be assessed against the same criteria as listed buildings, (PPG 15 paragraph 3.19). The Council will need to be satisfied that the benefits of demolition and redevelopment outweigh any loss to the local public interest. The Council will adopt a presumption in favour of retaining the building, and so demolition will only be permitted where the replacement scheme is of equal or superior quality.

Existing planning controls may also apply to buildings or sites on the Register. Many modifications to a building, such as external alterations, extensions and changes of use will require planning permission. Proposals involving works to a building or site on the Register should respect the particular character and interest of the building or site. The local interest of a building or site will be a material consideration in determining an application.

In some cases, external alterations to a building may be desirable and promote maintenance and preservation. The building does not have to be preserved exactly as it is, however the Council requires any alterations to be sympathetic and of high quality. Proposals affecting buildings on the Register should ensure that they preserve its local interest by:

- a. Respecting the building's design, appearance and any architectural or historical features in the design of any extensions or alterations.
- b. Ensuring that wherever practicable, materials appropriate to the building's local interest are used.
- c. Ensuring that any building within the curtilage or setting of a building or site on the Register is designed to be sympathetic to its appearance.

Owners are encouraged to carry out regular maintenance in order to safeguard the historic fabric and avoid the need for more costly repairs in the future.

It should be noted too that inclusion on the Local Heritage Register may help in maintaining the value of the property.

To summarise then we believe that at present insufficient background research has been carried out to investigate the case for the retention and/or adaptation of this building to accommodate and guarantee its future

preservation as a local heritage asset and future usage as part of the site's development plans.

We therefore urge the Council to take account of the above circumstances and the policies that apply and implement the necessary pre-emptive action before any demolition takes place and the building is lost forever.

With careful survey work and the right investment, this building should be saved from demolition, have a new lease of life and its presence be guaranteed in the landscape from which it originally evolved.

Yours sincerely,

D.J.Williams

Chair

Churnet Valley Conservation Society

CVCS

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