

LITTLEBOROUGH CIVIC TRUST



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To:
Planning and Regulation
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale
OL16 1XU

12th April 2016

Dear Sirs,

Re: Planning Application 16/00196/FUL – Litho House, Bare Hill Street, Littleborough

Case Officer: Paul Ambrose

We are aware of the application for planning permission for change of use and conversion to 8 residential units of Litho House, Bare Hill Street, Littleborough.

We would urgently request consideration of the following matters before approving the application:

- This building was the former Dance Hall of Littleborough Co-operative Society, and was erected in 1906 along with a bakery. This enabled better facilities to the people of Littleborough by providing a venue for social occasions. Regular dances were held in the building which was noted for its excellent sprung floor upstairs; it was popular and regularly used for receptions, meetings and dances until the 1960's.
- The building became the centre of a concentration of Co-operative Society properties, comprising the shops on Hare Hill Road, the Office on the corner of Hare Hill Road and Bare Hill Street under the dome, houses in Bare Hill Street, and the Society's stables off Bare Hill Street which subsequently became part of the Dance Hall/Bakery structure;
- The Dance Hall is within the boundary of the Littleborough Town Centre Conservation Area;
- Access to the Dance Hall is via an entrance on Bare Hill Street: inside is a decorative and unique stairway which is seldom seen and is a decorated ceramic tiled stairway leading to all floors and with the original doors leading off it. The tiles themselves may well be of historic interest being of early art deco (or even a pre-cursor to art deco) in design. (Photography of these tiles is currently being examined by the National Tile Museum)
- Immediately inside the entrance on Bare Hill Street and forming the base of the stairway, is a floor with two mosaics depicting the logo of Littleborough Co-operative Society. These are unique to the Borough of Rochdale.

We would strongly suggest that consideration should be given to:

- The preservation, and restoration of the exterior façade on Bare Hill Street and the courtyard entrance, with particular attention to the entrance doorway, windows and associated stone and glass works;
- The protection, preservation and conservation of the tiled stairway and mosaics on the entrance floor;
- Providing full access to the building prior to any works being undertaken to enable the identification, documentation and recording of significant features (including the possibility of producing a 3D “tour”) to eventually be held for posterity by the Co-operative History Group and/or Local Studies;
- If planning permission is to be granted it should be conditional on the full cost of recording and documenting the building being met by the developer.

As an associated issue, we would also be concerned about the increase in parking from an 8 dwelling development contributing to the increasing pressure on what is already an over-stretched facility in the centre of Littleborough.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Hook (Chairman)