

SaveOurSwan working group

Press Release

As you may already be aware Enterprise Inns have submitted a Planning Application to Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) to change the use of the White Swan public house in Hunmanby, which is a Grade 2 listed building, and its surrounds, into a number of new private dwellings. The proposals are certainly not in keeping with the rest of the vicinity which, along with the church, Cross Hill, Castle Hill, Bayley Gardens etc, form a conservation area and the Gateway to the village. Hunmanby is said to be the Gateway to the Wolds!

Many in the village and from further afield are outraged by the proposals to change such an iconic building into more housing and at the same time destroying a building and surrounds with so much history.

Public meetings, all exceptionally well attended, have been held to gauge general feelings to the application and sound out views and ideas about the best way forward. As a result of these meetings a working group called SaveOurSwan, composed of dedicated villagers, has been formed to oppose Enterprise Inn's proposals which would destroy a building that has been a court house, coaching inn, public house to name but a few uses! Objections to the proposals have flooded in to the Planning Department of the SBC and it is hoped that these objections will be viewed sympathetically when the Planning Committee meet to decide on the application, possibly in May or June.

The local Parish Council have unanimously backed the villagers' s views and the SaveOurSwan group's

stance. They have applied to SBC for the White Swan to be listed as an asset of community value under the Localism Act.

The local Heritage Society have also pledged their unreserved support for the campaign and are appalled at the proposals as the White Swan is an integral part of the Hunmanby Heritage Trail.

Recently, English Heritage have also registered their reservations over the Planning Application on a listed building in the heart of a village Conservation Area.

North Yorkshire Highways have now reviewed the Application and have registered concerns over the Plans, especially over access and highway dangers, and have recommended the application be REFUSED to the SBC!

The local MP, Anne McIntosh has been contacted and she has been helpful, putting the SaveOurSwan group in contact with the Communities Department who are advising the group on ideas on how to move things forward and to seek funding.

To back the campaign Facebook, Twitter accounts etc have been constructed for the SaveOurSwan work and to reach an even wider audience. More information is available on these sites as well as the Hunmanby Dot Com site! The above networking has lead to the group receiving many offers of help and assistance from near and far, esp from groups interested in preserving ancient buildings and old public houses, in particular!

An Expression of Interest leaflet drop in the village has taken place and outlying areas to keep people well informed of the current situation and about the possibility of acquiring the building as a village asset, if the Planning application is refused and the Asset of Community Value

application is accepted. Obviously, in an ideal world a "White Knight" who might be interested in acquiring and investing in the White Swan and returning it back to its glory days as a successful Pub/Restaurant would be greatly appreciated.

It is unclear if Enterprise Inns have sought a sale as such in recent times because no For Sale signs have been seen on the building. Little, if any, funding has been put into refurbishment of the pub by the owners. The SaveOurSwan group feel that building has immense potential, with some funding, as an ideal Pub/Restaurant and also as a place for many other village uses as well.

Whilst waiting for the outcome of the Planning Application the group have been busy exploring all possible avenues open to it in case the "Right to bid" for a community asset is successful.

An organisation called Locality have been contacted. They specialise in acquiring funding for groups who wish to exercise their " Right to bid". The group are also actively gathering evidence for a Pre Feasibility grant application which helps in getting groups ready to bid for a community asset. The views of the community are vital at this stage, hence the leaflet drop to see if people would be in favour of buying shares in any buy out of the pub.

To gain further information about taking on a Pub as a community asset and the implications behind it members of the group visited The Foresters Arms in Coverdale which recently reopened as Pub/Restaurant after acquiring it as an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act. Many good ideas and suggestions were forthcoming from the visit and should the SaveOurSwan campaign be successful the information gleaned would be invaluable.

It is hoped that Seachange from SBC will also be able to assist with the campaign by giving capacity building training for members which would be required for funding from Locality. This involves putting together a skills and expertise audit from the group.

Much has been achieved since Enterprise, out of the blue, put up their Development opportunity signs on the Pub surprising the villagers as one! Things are now, hopefully, being put into place should Enterprise Inns's Planning Application be refused by SBC and the SaveOurSwan 's and Parish Council's bid to have the building listed as an Asset of Community Value be successful. If this were to happen and the Right to Bid was successful the group would be in an advanced state to move things forward.

In the meantime if there is a White Knight out there with an eye for a great business opportunity to return the building to its former glories then they would more than welcomed by the village community.

Links: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/431603596923685/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurSwanTheWhiteSwanHunmanby>  
Web site : Hunmanby Dot Com  
Twitter:@SaveOurSwan