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THE
ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE SOCIETY
OF SCOTLAND

*For the study and
protection of Scottish
architecture*

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22nd February, 2016

The Director of Planning and Building Standards
Aurora House
3 Aurora Avenue
Clydebank
G81 1BF

Dear Sir,

**Application BW/16/055 :
Demolish former Pub. Public House 1 High Street Dumbarton G82 1NB**

This building is also known as the **Elephant and Castle**.

This application for a demolition warrant has been brought to our attention by concerned members of the community in West Dunbartonshire. As it forms an integral part of the streetscape of the High Street, it would be expected that this also require planning considerations. While we understand that a planning application is not legally obligatory as it is not listed, the impact of its removal from the streetscape would be significant. It is nevertheless very much part of the historic urban realm and any decision as to its fate should be exposed to public comment.

Back in 2007, Alistair Gregor of you department responded to Councillor Bolan :
"A warrant cannot be refused because there is a wish to retain the building. It would not, therefore, be appropriate to put the warrant to Committee for decision.
From a planning point of view the building is not listed and no permission is required for demolition".

This however does not avoid the need to see the impact within the greater context of the townscape and therefore play an influencing role in the outcome. Policy RET 4 : Town Centre Enhancement for instance notes new development and change. In our view this should be interpreted to include the removal of key buildings as much as infill or alteration.

There is a key established principle of any decision on demolition such as in this case :
Demolition can only be allowed if it is to be replaced with something better within a reasonable time frame.

This building contributes to an intrinsic environmental sense of place and of history of the town centre - the qualities that give the community as sense that this is their specific and

unique place. A place with which they can identify with and be proud of. The intimate scale of the Elephant and Castle and its past life as a pub are exactly those qualities that made it endearing. We also don't want that corner to be subject bland harsh and contradictory infill. We are therefore concerned about its demolition being allowed before the new proposal for the site is approved.

We realise that we cannot object unless it becomes a planning application, but wish go express our concerns and would appreciate it if you would let us know what planning considerations were considered.

Yours faithfully,

(Mrs) Audrey R Gardner,
Chairman. Cases Panel. Strathclyde Group.