

Speaking for Scotland's Buildings



16th April 2020

Development Management
Fife Council
Kingdom House
Kingdom Avenue
GLENROTHES
KY7 5LY

Dear Scott Simpson

RE: 20/00277/LBC Land To The South Of Aberdour Road At Geds Mill Close Burntisland Fife

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above planning application relating to the demolition of Colinswell Dovecot, a category C-listed building, dating from the 18th century, which is currently on the Buildings at Risk register. The Forth & Borders Cases Panel of the AHSS has considered the application and wishes to make the following comments.

There is a strong presumption in favour of retaining listed buildings and we do not consider that a clear case has been made to justify the demolition of this historically interesting structure. The criteria outlined in Historic Environment Scotland's 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Demolitions' have not been met, given that (a) this building is still of special historic interest; (b) being of traditional construction, it is capable of meaningful repair; (c) its demolition is not essential to delivering significant benefits to the wider community; and (d) no evidence has been supplied to show that reparation of the doocot would result in a conservation deficit for the overall site.

Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) stipulates that demolition is only allowable where 'all efforts to retain a building have been exhausted', and HEP3 states 'steps should be taken to demonstrate that alternatives have been explored', yet this application shows no evidence that either of these requirements have been met. Nor has any attempt been made to identify the cultural significance of this building, as outlined in HEP1.

It is widely accepted that consent for demolition is only granted in exceptional circumstances. In our opinions these circumstances are far from exceptional – it is merely an all-too familiar case of a developer finding it inconvenient to have a decayed listed building on their site. Accordingly, the AHSS wishes to object to the proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Lucy Gray, Convenor
on behalf of the Forth & Borders Cases Panel

Chairman: Martin Robertson

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