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DECISION NOTICE – COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID

Reference: 2014.003

05 August 2019

Proposed Asset of Community Value – The Cock Inn, Denford

Nominated By: Denford Parish Council

Deadline for listing decision: 06/08/19

Current Owner – YYX Limited

Action Taken Prior to Decision

- Notification to current owner of nomination – no response received.
- Consultation with Chair of Policy and Resources Committee (Cllr R Lewis) and Ward Members (Cllr R Beattie and Cllr A Smith) as required under the council's Community Right to Bid Policy.
- Viewing of Pub Website.
- Research for references on the definition of current and realistic future 'community use' for the purposes of making a decision on the nomination, in Assets of Community Value Guide by Christopher Cant QC.(Version 6)

Background

Nomination History

This nomination is the second for this property. The Cock Inn was initially listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) on 19/09/14. The legislation decrees that an asset should be listed for 5 years unless a relevant disposal is made during this period. This council received notification of the intention to sell the property in October 2014 and notified the nominating body of this; however no expressions of interest to bid for the property were received from eligible community groups. The ownership of the property has not exchanged hands since being listed as an ACV in 2014.

The property has now been subject to a second nomination by Denford Parish Council. This decision relates to the second nomination which has been considered in the same way as a completely new nomination would be. It should be noted that the interpretation of Asset of Community Value legislation has developed since 2014 through case law, as noted in Christopher Cant's Guide.

History of the Site

The Cock Inn is situated in the centre of Denford village and is the only public house in the village. The closest Public House to The Cock Inn are:

- The Duke Arms in Woodford (4 miles)
- The Axe and Compass in Ringstead (1.5 miles)
- Various pubs in Thrapston (approximately 2 miles)

The pub building dates from the 17th century but no evidence is available as to how long it has operated as a public house.

Considerations

Does the proposed asset meet the definition of an asset of community value specified in Section 88 (1) paragraphs (a) and (b) of the Localism Act 2011, i.e. the main (i.e. non-ancillary) use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, or has recently done so, and is likely to do so in the future (during the next five years)?

Evidence of recent community use that furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community:

According to the nomination The Cock Inn hosts community group meetings and plays a key role in hosting numerous community social events and charity fundraising events in the village. The Cock Inn is the only Public House in the village. There is a village hall; however, this is only used for pre-arranged events. Without this Public House, the community of Denford would have nowhere to meet which would be detrimental to their social wellbeing and social interests.

The above is evidence of recent community use which furthered the social well-being and social interest of the local community.

Evidence of Realistic Future Community Use

The pub is, and will continue to be used for a range of community events and activities including the following:

- a) Community group meetings; The Denford Thespians, Village Hall Committee, Newsletter Editorial meetings, Church Mowers, Swimming Club, Denford Walking Group, Denford Super 6 Football Group plus quite a few individual event groups.
- b) Community social events; Christmas shopping night and Christmas lights switch on, Remembrance day presentation, monthly quiz, village boules competition, twice weekly darts night, St Georges and Anzac Day, numerous charity fundraising nights, live bands, pub games nights, monthly gin bar, beer festivals and many more individual events that supported by both local and wider community residents. All events are advertised in the village newsletter monthly.

Although there was no community group expression of interest in 2014 when the pub was put up for sale, there is also no evidence at this point that its continued function as a public house at the heart of its community is in doubt and it is therefore realistic to assume that it could continue to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community as it is doing so now.

For those properties where a sale is considered imminent, please provide details of how the property would be managed and/or the business case for long term financial stability if known?

Should the pub come up for sale and be purchased by the community, with help and advice from the Parish Council, they would set up a company with a management committee to manage the business on behalf of the community and employ a manager to run it on a daily basis. There are local people who have experience in running community owned social clubs who have offered to help with this and would be able to put systems in place to maintain financial stability.

Does the proposed asset meet any of the criteria for exemption specified in Section 88 (3) and associated regulations?

There is no evidence that the asset meets any of the criteria for exemption.

The views of the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee and Ward Member

- Cllr R Lewis (Chair of Policy and Resources Committee) was supportive of the nomination advising that he strongly supports this ACV nomination. Cllr Lewis believes that The Cock Inn is very much at the centre of many activities for the village and plays a major part in the Denford village life.

Decision

Having considered all of the factors above, it is my view that the nominated asset falls within the category of an asset of community value as defined by the Localism Act and associated regulations and that it should be listed as such by this council.

Stacey Parker

Corporate Support Manager

05/08/19