

REDEVELOPMENT



Danger Masonry has fallen onto street from the Halls



Run down Building has lain empty for thirty years



Plans Developer Derek Souter

£750k to fund for Art School

MORE than £750,000 has been donated to a fund for the rebuilding of Glasgow School of Art.

The Hugh Fraser Foundation, long-term supporters of the GSA, were the first to sign up to support the Mackintosh Appeal, pledging £300,000.

The Cameron Mackintosh Foundation has committed £250,000 to the Appeal.

The Art School also received around £150,000 in donations in the days following the fire.

Professor Tom Inns, Director of Glasgow School of Art said: "We have been moved by the incredible generosity that we have experienced since the fire."

"I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to all the institutions and individuals who have donated to the appeal to date."

"This support along with the many messages of good will and offers of academic and other expert support have meant so much to us."

HALLS NEED TO BE SAVED

REMOVING scaffolding that has been covering a city centre building for five years could risk people's lives, a developer has warned.

The A-listed Egyptian Halls on Union Street were designed by acclaimed architect Alexander "Greek" Thomson.

They have fallen into disrepair after being left unused for three decades.

The halls have been covered in scaffolding since 2009. A printed wrap over the scaffolding shows how the halls used to look.

Dundee developer Derek Souter, who owns the building, says it is needed to protect pedestrians from chunks of falling masonry, as well as protecting the structure from the weather.

Glasgow City Council have requested the scaffolding be removed to improve the amenity of Union Street.

Some shop owners on Union Street blame the scaffolding for criminality including pickpocketing and drug dealing, while others say they have seen it prevent death or serious injury.

At a meeting last week with tenants, architects, members of the Greek Thomson Society and Save the Egyptian Halls society, Souter promised to install CCTV to address their concerns.

Derek said: "I feel for the tenants

Shop owners' concerned

Joe McGuire

of Union street. But if the scaffolding comes down, someone will be killed.

"Glasgow City Council seem to believe that if the scaffolding comes down, Union Street will become a Nirvana of commerce."

The current plan for the 19th century building would see the upper floors converted into a hotel with a two-storey extension, and a bar and restaurants on the ground floor, a scheme Souter says would take three years to implement and cost £20million.

But he wants a funding shortfall plugged by public money, and warns without action the architectural treasure may need to be demolished.

The Heritage Lottery Fund last year launched a heritage Enterprise programme, aimed at financing the redevelopment of historic buildings.

Grants cannot be paid to profit-making companies so the Egyptian Halls Building Preservation Trust was created and submitted an application for funding at the end of June. A decision is expected next spring.

Historic Scotland have offered a grant of £1.65million towards the project,

while a time-limited £1million grant approved by Glasgow City Council in May 2010 lapsed in March 2011.

Derek added: "The council seem to believe because we want to save the building we'll find a magic solution."

"If we'd done this project 10 years ago I believe Union Street would be undergoing a renaissance by now."

"We aren't here to get the council to pay for everything, but are we not meant to make a commercial profit from this?"

A council spokesman said: "Our planning team have been instrumental in enabling the building owners to obtain planning and listed building consent for the refurbishment."

"The council has carried out an external survey. This identified that essential works were required to remove all loose material from the façade of the building, and Mr Souter has indicated he will carry out an external sweep down of the building."

"Once that is completed, the council will assess any remaining items of work to be completed to allow us to make a decision about when the scaffolding can be removed without affecting public safety."

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE



"The scaffolding doesn't look very good. We've seen brawls between gangs and drug dealing."

"We cater to families and youngsters so it doesn't help having this criminality."

"The scaffolding means that bins from over there are all on our side of the street as well."

Stewart Crichton, 25, Garnethill, works at the Games Workshop



"I watched a customer walk out and have a material fall on him."

"The main bit of the debris had been caught by the scaffolding, if it hadn't been there he would be dead."

"If the scaffolding was to come down, it would be a great help to my business, but the safety concern has to come first."

Pasha Ali, owner of shop Stargazer under the scaffolding

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