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Developer needs names to save halls

Petition plan to gather support for city landmark

By RACHEL LOXTON

THE owner of the historic Egyptian Halls is appealing to the public to help save the building – despite applying for permission to flatten it.

Derek Souter is holding a petition day tomorrow outside the 138-year-old A-Listed Alexander “Greek” Thomson building to gather support for his campaign.

The halls, opposite the side entrance of Central Station in Union Street, have lain vacant since around 1980 and are now covered in scaffolding.

Mr Souter, director of Union Street Properties (USP) and Union Street Investments (USI), claims he was forced to apply to Glasgow City Council to have the property demolished because of rising renovation costs.

But despite this he says he still wants to save the building.

He said: “It’s about raising awareness. We will dress the scaffolding boards with posters to raise awareness of what we’re trying to do – save the Egyptian Halls.”



■ The landmark Egyptian Halls, on Union Street, have been lying empty since the early 1980s

USP and USI have so far spent £5 million on the project and are willing to invest a further £12m.

The city council agreed a £1m grant and Historic Scotland a grant of around £1.65m but Mr Souter says this is not enough.

This project needs input from everyone – it needs collaboration

A council spokesman said: “We have been in discussion with Mr Souter for a considerable time.

“We remain very keen to see the building brought back into use... it is unlikely that the council would support any proposal for demolition.”

A Historic Scotland spokeswoman called the Egyptian Halls “one of Glasgow’s most his-

torically significant buildings”.

Many believe the redevelopment of the Thomson masterpiece would aid the regeneration of Union Street.

Mr Souter, whose original plan was to restore the Egyptian Halls to their former glory and create a 250-bedroom hotel, added: “We want some politicians to turn up [on Saturday] and say they want to save the building. We want people to turn up and say yeah rather than talk about it and blame the developer.

“This project has taken 31 years to solve. It needs input from everyone, from the public and private sector. It needs collaboration.”

The petition will be available to sign from 9am-12pm tomorrow outside the Egyptian Halls in Union Street.

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