

**BEFORE THE GORE DISTRICT
COUNCIL HEARING PANEL**

UNDER	The Resource Management Act 1991
IN THE MATTER OF	An Application by J D Phillips
TO	DEMOLISH A SCHEDULED HERITAGE STRUCTURE
IN ORDER TO	BUILD AND OPERATE A COMMERCIAL BUILDING with less than the District Plan requirement for car parking

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF SHARI KAY-SMITH

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Shari Kay-Smith of Alexandra, Property Manager states:

1. I have been employed for the past 15 years with Southern Estate Properties as a property and office manager under the supervision of owner Jack Phillips.
2. When I first started this job back in 2003, Jack owned 131 properties, which included sections, residential and commercial property in and around the Southland area, mainly Gore and Mataura. Making him one of the biggest rate payers at the time. A lot of the properties were not rent ready at that time and were not for some years later; which always made me question him why bother?
3. It was extremely mind boggling at the start as I knew nothing of the industry, but with Jack and his late wife Carmen's guidance and experience they both encouraged and supported me, which then led to managing his everyday affairs whilst he resides in America. He started investing in NZ over 20 years ago and he and Carmen made sure they came at least 3-4 times a year, especially when he was restoring a property. Since the loss of his wife and getting older Jack finds it more and more challenging but still makes sure he's here at least twice a year.
4. Jack is extremely fond of old buildings especially the historic ones. In fact, I would say 95% of his properties are old, including his own residence in Albany Street Gore which he beautifully revamped to its original state. He amongst anyone does not like to see any buildings come down. I recall how moved he was when the Old Mataura Picture Theatre came down. He wanted everything salvaged that possible could be - even the seats are still in storage today. The empty section was then donated back to council.
5. He had a vision for Mataura loving its river and character of the township. He assigned an artist to paint a huge mural on the old Squash Courts of the river with a brown trout fisherman to capture

the atmosphere of the small town, the townsfolk all approved as it still looks impressive today as you drive over the bridge. Main St Mataura and so many of the residential properties he purchased were very derelict and needing major repair, knowing this himself; it would very well take several years before he would capture any revenue. He has replaced so many roofs and restored most of his properties to bring them back from neglect. First thing he did was put a new roof on each shop to protect them any further from deterioration, then slowly work on the inside. I recall a lot of positive feedback from the local public when he replaced the leaking shop verandahs. Alan Taylor well respected Chairman of the community board often stated along with other local members, What would these buildings look like today if it were not for Jack Phillips? No-one else would pour money into a town especially Mataura the way he has done; making considerable losses along the way.

6. Jack purchased a lot of these old commercial buildings for the love of them not for the sake of just buying them, take 101/103 Main St (Old Post Office) for example. It was very run-down at the time of purchase. He incorporated the old with the new, restoring the south end adding a glass pyramid roof within the courtyard to enable another closed- in area for venues and so forth. He was very particular with what he wanted inside keeping within the charm which includes beautiful sketches of yesteryear behind the old window frames. The finished project looked amazing with its opening as The Old Post bakery/café which is still tenanted, one side has a café the other a florist.
7. It has also cost him considerable expense over 120K at 5 Irk Street Gore to replace the heavy tiled roof and abide with council to replace the 4 existing chimneys with artificial chimney chases, then getting it painted at the same time keeping within the building code and historic aspect of the building.
8. To date he has spent \$45k alone on 128 Main Street in professional fees. He asks the question why I should keep pouring

money into a building that only has a rateable value of \$1,000. I cannot rent it! I cannot sell it! I need to draw the line somewhere. If I were to strengthen and renovate the costs would be ongoing, where as demolition and rebuild is a definite cost and is final. In the meantime, I am still paying near \$3k for rates. It would be so much easier to walk away and do nothing, but I do not want that outcome, and at this point and time of my life I need a break from council with a final answer.

9. Since knowing Jack over the years not only as my employer but now as a close friend, we would often all go out for tea or he and Carmen would come up and enjoy themselves, this is when my husband and I learned well informed and how passionate he is on old buildings along with his love of trees. I have and always will have the utmost respect for Jack and I feel very privileged and incredibly grateful for giving me the knowledge he has within the property industry.

Shari Kay-Smith

5 June 2018