

11 Nov 1999

Thumbs up for 40 flats

VILLAGERS have backed plans to convert a derelict mill into luxury flats.

But they said traffic must be kept under control at the development at Oats Royd Mill, Luddenden.

A public meeting was held last night at Luddenden Methodist Church to discuss a scheme, drawn up by Property Renaissance Ltd, of Silsden, near Keighley. It includes converting the two single storey weaving sheds and building a three-storey annexe between them to create 40 two-bedroomed apartments.

Resident Mr Michael Denton said: "I think it's excellent. The mill has to be used and not be allowed to deteriorate."

Mr Roger Hepworth, of New Road, said the scheme could mean another 80 cars on narrow roads which were already heavily used.

By IAN ROSSER

Farmer Mr Robert Midgley said: "There wouldn't be a problem if somehow we could get somewhere to park them, even if they were only pockets for one or two cars."

"If you put a bomb on Oats Royd Mill it would be an improvement. I think any scheme should be encouraged."

Mr John Temple, for Property Renaissance, said the buildings would remain as they were, with a new roof on a section which collapsed during a £3 million fire in September.

He said the plans included on-site car parking, restoring a damaged 150ft chimney but did not include private gardens.

"Property Renaissance are very tra-

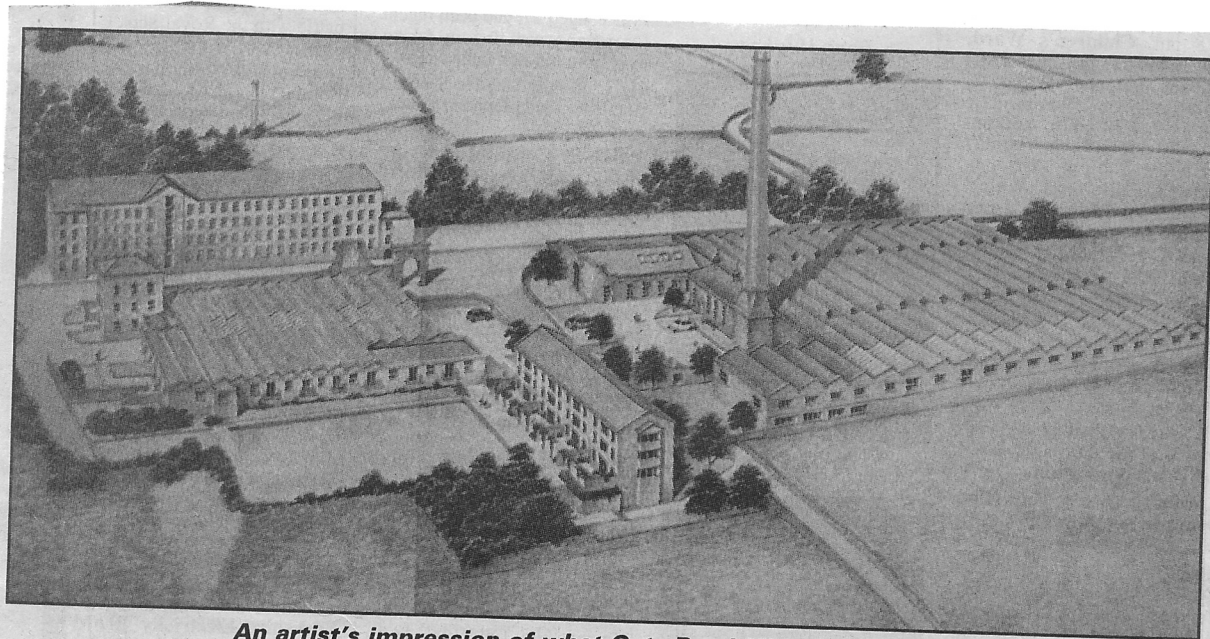
ditional designers and builders," he said. Only one of the 35 villagers at the meeting voted against the scheme.

An alternative project to convert the mill into a heritage museum and healing centre has been drawn up by Mr George Drake.

His plans will be discussed at another public meeting at the church on November 25.

Mr Rodney Collinge, chairman of Luddenden Conservation Society, which organised the meeting said: "Whatever happens, the mill has got to be updated to some sort of use, whether that use is industrial or residential."

If plans for the luxury homes are passed by Calderdale Council, building work is expected to take about 18 months.



An artist's impression of what Oats Royd Mill could look like