

## Nick Salt says he will battle Milner Field Farm innovation centre plans 'all the way'

A DESCENDANT of Sir **Titus Salt** says he will continue to fight controversial plans to demolish a dairy farm and replace it with an innovation centre.

Nick Salt, 71, the great-great-grandson of the man who built **Saltaire**, is objecting to a proposed innovation centre on Milner Field Farm, Primrose Lane, **Gilstead**, which will include research laboratories and units for start-up businesses.

Protesters are objecting to the plans as the site is on green belt land and the main access would be over a single track bridge.

The closing date for the application's public consultation is Friday, March 17, and it is expected to go before Bradford Council planners next month.

The proposal has received more than 1,200 comments on Bradford Council's planning application website.

Mr Salt is the great-grandson of Titus Salt Jnr and his wife Catherine, who bought the Milner Field Estate in 1869. The old manor house and farm buildings at the top end of the estate were then demolished to make way for the building of the new Milner Field house, completed in 1871.

The model farm was originally run by various managers and tenants, and in 1902 a tenancy was given by Catherine Salt to John Downs, whose family descendants are still the tenant farmers.

Mr Salt, of Powys, Mid Wales, said: "We will be fighting this all of the way.

"I feel strongly about it. It is important to keep this history alive.

"It would be really sad as it is the only dairy farm in the area. It supplies milk to the area, provides jobs and is on green belt land."

The plans, submitted by Bradford Innovation Centre Limited (BICL), include the retention and refurbishment of the Milner Field Farm House.

The applicants say the University of Bradford's support for the project could lead to them offering internships at the innovation centre.

BICL spokesman David Beal said: "BICL intends to repurpose the farm buildings to serve as an innovation centre, while all the land would remain zoned as green belt and would be environmentally reinstated to enhance the local wildlife and aesthetics by transforming the current low-biodiversity pasture into a mosaic of woodland and floriferous meadows.

"The land would also become an educational resource for students and members of the public through arranged access."

Meanwhile, the University of Bradford has defended its decision to become a shareholder in the controversial proposal.

The institution has taken a ten per cent shareholding stake in BICL. It joins the Hartley Environment Trust with an 80 per cent stake and Globe Innovation Centre Limited, whose shareholders include the 3M Company and the University of Huddersfield, with ten per cent, a letter sent to Bradford Council revealed.

A University of Bradford spokesman said: "The University's interest in the Bradford Innovation Centre lies in the specialist, technical facilities it will provide, of which there is a critical shortage in Bradford.

"The centre will provide space for growing companies to take advantage of much-needed cutting-edge facilities, provide access to research and development expertise and enable them to access funding for growth.

"The University will seek to ensure that the facilities contribute fully to the success of Bradford and its economy."