

Planning Application 20/00934/FUL Comments on the proposal for the erection of new dwellings to the rear of The George Inn, 5 Sandford Road, Littlemore, OX4 4PU.

I object to this planning application for the following reasons:

1. The contemporary style of the houses and choice of materials are not in keeping with the traditional style of architecture within the oldest part of the Littlemore Conservation Area. The large, dark aluminium framed windows and use dark timbers/ cladding impact adversely in relationship to the smaller, white framed windows divided by glazing bars which are characteristic of vernacular buildings nearby.
2. The proposed number of houses threatens the preservation of the space between buildings that is recorded as a significant feature in the Littlemore Conservation Area Appraisal (Oxford City Council, April 2008).
3. The larger houses have tall chimneys. The design statement does not specify the function of these. If these are for open fires, this is not compatible with the local Low Carbon strategy.
4. Pathways towards the bin and cycle storage appear to stop at the edge of grass areas. Wheeling cycles and heavy bins across a grassed area will create muddy tracks. The hard surfaces need to extend in front of these storage areas.
5. Visitor parking spaces for the houses are welcome. However, each house needs at least one designated adjacent parking space to enable easier access for people with limited mobility and those carrying of loads or young children to/from their vehicle. The proposed unallocated parking will advantage households who have multiple cars or return early, disadvantaging later returning residents who will have nowhere to park. Householders will need to use cars, due to poor public transport connectivity (see below).
6. The Transport statement is poorly researched. The No 3 bus service serves Rose Hill, not Littlemore. The 3A service is every 30 minutes Mon - Sat, only up to 8pm and is often unreliable. There is no 3A bus service on a Sunday. The Rail Station and Thornhill Park and Ride (coach for London) can only be reached by changing buses in Oxford City, adding to journey times. Residents frequently experience missed connections with their second bus, resulting an increased use of private cars.
7. The reduction of the outdoor seating area, skittles/ darts areas and parking spaces at the rear of the pub is likely to impact on this business, possibly making it unviable. The George Inn has provided hospitality in Littlemore since the early 18th century and has significant historic value. The car parking spaces are used by parents bringing children to/from the Emmanuel Christian School, for Community Fairs, elderly residents attending the Community lunches, by visiting darts teams and Oxford United fans gathering prior to home and away matches. On-street parking is limited by proximity to the junction with Railway Lane and a zebra crossing and is potentially hazardous. Railway Lane is narrow and already used for overflow parking from the Village Hall.
8. Overall, while an increasing population in Oxford requires new homes, further consideration needs to be given to an approach that achieves a better balance between the space given to new dwellings and that allocated to The George, retaining local character and enabling the pub to serve the community as a viable business. The current plan does not meet this requirement.
9. If planning permission is given, consideration will also need to be given to the management of construction traffic in relation to pedestrian safety, particularly school children. The front wall of No 3 Sandford Road, which is positioned forward of the pub building, requires vehicles to drive onto the pavement area before a clear view towards the zebra crossing can

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