

# Comments for Planning Application 21/00345/FUL

## Application Summary

Application Number: 21/00345/FUL

Address: Wheatsheaf Yard, The Wheatsheaf High Street Oxford OX1 4DF

Proposal: Conversion of first and second floors to create 9no. student rooms, shared kitchen and common area. Formation of 2no. front dormers in association with a loft conversion. Removal of 1no. window to front elevation. Alteration to 1no. window and 1no. door to front elevation. Insertion of 1no. door to front elevation. Provision of bin and cycle stores

Case Officer: Tobias Fett

## Customer Details

Name: Dr Clare Heaviside

Address: 3 Chilswell Path Oxford OX1 5AP

## Comment Details

Commenter Type: Members of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Effect on adjoining properties
- Effect on character of area
- Effect on existing community facilities

Comment: The venue at the Wheatsheaf is a vital part of Oxford's cultural scene. There are multiple long running (over decades) regular music nights hosted at the venue, which means that newly formed bands have the opportunity to showcase their skills and many go on to much bigger venues and festivals. Removing this venue (the last in the city centre, despite what the applicants say) means losing this vital stepping stone in the path of many musicians in Oxford. The Wheatsheaf also hosts touring bands from other parts of the UK. People attend the Wheatsheaf on a regular basis, visiting the city centre and spending money in other pubs and restaurants on the same evening. This regular showcasing of local talent brings economic benefits and encourages economic growth. The loss of the Cellar was already a devastating loss to the community, and if the Wheatsheaf goes, there will not be any other venues of the like in the city centre. The applicants list a number of venues they classify as similar venues, including the Sheldonian, churches, and small restaurants. This is really clutching at straws and shows the lack of venues for live music in Oxford. Oxford has always prided itself on its rich music scene, but by focusing on the short term profit of yet more student accommodation, it loses a most important cultural locations. As soon as the upstairs is turned into flats, the occupants are likely to complain about the presence of the groundfloor pubs and bars nearby (Wheatsheaf and the bar behind) and I fear they will be permanently closed. This is a real kick in the teeth for hospitality in Oxford, after a year of uncertainty, and with the promise of emerging from the pandemic, only to find an unnecessary closure of a key venue, loved and enjoyed by many. For the reasons outlined above,

I oppose the application in the strongest possible terms.