

# 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: Mr Craig Bower

Address: 6 Grays Road Headington Oxford OX3 7QA

## Comment Details

Commenter Type: Members of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Effect on character of area
- Effect on existing community facilities
- General dislike or support for proposal
- Local plan policies

Comment: I strongly object to this planning application for a number of reasons.

The Wheatsheaf as it stands is a well-established hub of Oxford social life for many hundreds, if not thousands of people. The closing of the 1st floor venue at the Wheatsheaf would be a tragedy and would have wide ranging consequences both culturally on the live and grassroots music scene, and also socially on the wider community.

The viability report is misleading and has clearly been written by people who have no knowledge of Oxford or its cultural and social demographics.

By stating that the revenue from the venue only accounts for 25% of the total revenue of the premises, it is making the assumption that the ground floor pub and the 1st floor venue are totally independent of each other when gigs are being held on the premises. This shows a total ignorance of how it works in reality, with the pubs punters and the venues performers and audience mixing freely.

Further ignorance is shown by the thinly detailed list of 7 alternate live music venues. When did Christie & Co undertake their research into, and analysis of, these venues? It is plainly evident that no more research was put into finding these venues than a simple 5 minute search on google, followed by a cut and paste of ratings and descriptions into the report. All conducted with no consideration of suitability with regard to genres of music and associated audience.

The proposal is to turn the top 2 floors into 9 student flats, but this is going to have little if any effect on the purported lack of student accommodation in Oxford. More so, the location would be prohibitively expensive for your average student. They would only cater for an elite clique of students whose parents are wealthy enough to bank-roll them through university, purely for the kudos of bragging to their peers that they went to university at Oxford.

Maybe a better plan, if Oxford is so short of student accommodation, would be to convert the extravagantly large John Lewis into student flats when it closes.

This is being driven by nothing more than greed on the part of the property owner(s). No doubt, had they been confident that permission would be granted, they would have applied to close the entire premises. This is a 'foot-in-the-door' temporary solution for them that they know will have an adverse effect on the pub.

Through disruption of the pub's atmosphere and character, coupled with the inevitable increase in complaints about noise and unsuitable behaviour, they can devalue it. This then paves the way, in a year or 18 months time, to claim the pub is no longer viable and close it permanently.

Watch out House Bar and Formosan, you're next.