

# 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 Tom McKibbin

Address: Great Clarendon Street Oxford OX2 6DP

## Comment Details

Commenter Type: Members of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

- Amount of development on site
- Effect on character of area
- Effect on existing community facilities
- General dislike or support for proposal
- Local plan policies
- Other - give details

Comment: Like many of the people commenting here, I would like to raise my objection to the planning proposal based on the importance of this venue to the culture and character of Oxford as a city, not to mention the scarcity of similar venues remaining in the city.

The Wheatsheaf is one of the few grassroots music venues which still operates in Oxford - a city world-renowned for producing, attracting, and fostering musical talent. Some of these artists have had a profound affect on popular culture across the globe; bands like Radiohead who had their start playing local venues including the Wheatsheaf.

The last few years have seen a number of local venues being forced to close their doors, in spite of public outcry and fundraising campaigns to save them. This response from the public speaks to the view that the character, culture, and history of Oxford is being eradicated by gentrification and that the value of the arts is being outweighed by the self-interest of the University. Whichever way you cut it, nine student rooms in a city replete with student accommodation will never begin to make up for the loss of The Wheatsheaf as a music venue - one of the few remaining bastions of local culture and character.

What attracts a student to a city, other than the reputation of the learning establishment they plan to attend? The appeal of a vibrant night life, and the availability of places to unwind and express

ones self. Closing the doors of the Wheatsheaf will rob students and locals of such a place. I have personally attended and played countless gigs at the Wheatsheaf. Musicians from all over the world have been drawn there to perform. These musicians have been booked by local student societies and hardworking promoters, and have been looked after by professionals who have made putting on gigs the focus of their careers. Even when there were still a plethora of local venues to choose from (unlike now), The Wheatsheaf was undoubtedly one of the most important and beloved venues in the city for musicians and audience alike.

At a time when the arts are more gravely undervalued in this country than ever before, and the events industry has been more harshly affected by the pandemic than any other, it is particularly cruel to strike another hammer blow to an already struggling venue.

I would urge whoever reads this (and all of the other impassioned protests) to strongly consider the community value of a local venue like the Wheatsheaf, particularly in a city so irreconcilably associated with music as Oxford.