

# 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 Oliver Beard

Address: 104B Walton Street Oxford OX2 6EB

## 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

Comment: I believe it would be a great mistake to convert the first floor of the Wheatsheaf pub, which is currently a small live music venue and an essential, centrally located part of what is a very vibrant and productive local music scene. As a performer I have played at the Wheatsheaf several times and from experience can say that a venue of this size is perfect for fostering upcoming bands. You need a smaller space when you do not have a big following and are learning the ropes, and the shape and size of the venue allows a great atmosphere even with a small selection of fans. As a fan of live music as well I know how great it can be to see a band in this kind of room too, where you can get up close to the performer and still feel part of an audience. The Wheatsheaf put on a range of small, local events that simply couldn't fill some of the larger venues in the city. It is a well run space, cheap to enter and easy for all to get to given it's location. To lose this kind of space, particularly since we lost the Cellar not long ago, would be a hammer-blow to the local scene. At the moment there is not much live music going on but once the Covid situation has passed there will be a real appetite for things to return to their previous state. If venues like this are not there then the space for creative people to develop and hone their talents will not be there.

I believe the value of such a space far outweighs the benefits of such a small number of student flats. I can see that from a purely economic perspective, and particularly in the current climate, the landlord would be tempted to do this. However, given the massive amount of student accommodation already being put up across the city in much greater numbers, and given the

cultural value of the live music venue (which will not be easy to replace) it would degrade the quality of life for those of us that value live music and creative works, will reduce the appeal of the city as a place to live and work for all and be a loss for us all. Part of Oxford's appeal as a resident is the scale and quality of the cultural scene, whether that be music, theatre, art or dance. Losing any part of it degrades that, and to lose a venue as important as the Wheatsheaf would be catastrophic. I urge the Council to consider how damaging this change would be to the city and our culture as a whole and reject the application.