

# 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: Ms Jacqueline Cutting

Address: 42 Ferry Road Oxford OX3 0EU

## 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
- Information missing from plans
- Local plan policies
- Not enough info given on application

Comment: Dear Oxford City Council,

I urge you to reject this planning application. Whilst I appreciate Oxford is a student town and that accommodation for students is important, there are numerous developments all over the city in suitable residential locations for students. It is not necessary to close the only remaining grass roots live music venue in the centre of town in order to provide student accommodation.

The applicant's suggestion that there are numerous alternative venues within Oxford is simply not true. The list of alternative venues given in the submission includes many that are not the town centre, and others that serve a distinctly different audience. To compare this venue with the Jacqueline du Pre Music Room is equivalent to equating a beloved coffee house to Le Manoir au Quat'Saisons - they serve very different fare!

The application's suggestion is that the venue isn't viable and yet the viability assessment actually confirms that the whole pub including the upstairs bar with venue is a viable business. The venue is not a separate business from the ground floor bar financially or in its use. Many visitors in the

upstairs music venue use the downstairs bar to place orders in the main pub as it is frequently easier to be served in the main pub area. In order to get permission to change the use it must be proven the whole pub (both bars together) are not viable to reach the criteria set out in planning policy V6 in the Oxford Local Plan 2036. The applicant has actually proven it is a profitable business over several years. The temporary impact of the closure caused by the Coronavirus pandemic does not prove financial unviability.

Furthermore, this application would undermine the Oxford Local Plan 2036, V7 which says: 'The City Council will seek to protect and retain existing cultural and community facilities. Planning permission will not be granted for development that results in the loss of such facilities unless new or improved facilities can be provided at a location equally or more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.'

This venue is an important social hub for local people and contributes to Oxford's rich cultural heritage of live music. With British musicians currently unable to tour Europe freely, music venues are needed more than ever else we risk serious damage to the music industry at a local and national level. Please act to save this venue. The end of the pandemic is in sight and, like many people, seeing live music is something I have been greatly looking forward to. Please support this important Oxford cultural venue by rejecting this application.

Thank you and best wishes,

Jacqueline Cutting