

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 Arthur Themen

Address: 5 Wharfe Lane Henley on Thames RG9 2LL

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: The Wheatsheaf is home to the Spin Jazz club, one of the most important venues for music of this type in the United Kingdom. Recognition of this fact is evident in the result of the recent parliamentary jazz awards which considered the Spin to be the most important jazz music venue in the UK. (On this particular year the shortlist included London's world famous Ronny Scott's club). Jazz musicians on the whole do not operate with the protection of a working contract which means that during the pandemic they do not qualify for any subsidy under the current legislation unlike many other musicians. Moreover, the COVID situation means that music venues in general have had to close down. The understandably slow lifting of lockdown means that the smaller successful clubs, which attract a capacity audience where social distancing is not possible, are unlikely to re-open for some considerable time.

Peter Oxley and his friends have worked tirelessly over the years to ensure the success of this venue, and, as a working jazz musician myself, I always regard the invitation to appear there as one of the highlights of my musical year.

Putting the questions of music aside, the Wheatsheaf is a charismatic public house which serves its local population. One of the attractions of Oxford is finding such a tavern down a narrow ally close to the city centre. In these days when Inns such as this are closing down at a great rate, it would be sad to see the Wheatsheaf going to the wall when it is regarded by many as an essential part of Oxford city's culture. Oxford does of course rely on its student population but there must be other ways of providing for their living accommodation rather than shutting down an important part of the city's life.