

This is an objection to the following planning applications:

- White Horse, 22 High Street Kimpton Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8RJ
 - **25/00091/LBC**|Internal and external alterations to facilitate the change of use and conversion of former White Horse PH to a mixed use comprising a single residential dwelling (Use Class C3), and micropub (Sui Generis).
 - **25/00090/FP**|Change of Use and conversion of former White Horse PH to a mixed use comprising a single residential dwelling (Use Class C3), and micropub (Sui Generis). External annexe for garage and studio ancillary to the main dwelling. Demolition of the existing rear shed, lean-to, and rear portions of the property. Structural works, replacement floors walls, subdivision and replacement of the main roof and existing windows, internal alterations, servicing, and rear extensions to facilitate these changes.

My objections are based on the following:

- I - HARMFUL TO A LISTED BUILDING - The White Horse is a Grade II Listed Building. The proposed development is harmful and does not outweigh any public benefits

- II - CONFLICTS WITH NHDC LOCAL PLAN AND NPPF 93 – the proposed changes conflict with aims and policies of the NHDC Local Plan

NHDC is requested to REFUSE this application. The NHDC is also requested to SEEK A GOOD OUTCOME for the building as a viable Public House (not Micro-pub) so this heritage asset can be saved.

SEEKING A GOOD OUTCOME FOR THS IMPORTANT HERITAGE ASSET

In the previous application in October 2020, the Condition Report (see page 7: https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=A805B21591F411EB9E7500155D84E40E) states:

“2.6 Condition

The building is currently in poor condition and it is crucial that works are carried out relatively quickly to prevent further decline. “

In the current application December 2024, the Condition Report (See page 4: https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=53030C8A6F0C4F148DC022CFC2647C89), states:

“The inspection of The White Horse has revealed, as identified from previous surveys, that there remains evidence of ongoing decay to numerous elements of the historic fabric that, if not addressed, will see further deterioration to the point of being beyond repair.

..... In summary, a holistic and conservation-led package of remedial work should be prepared as a matter of urgency to avoid the loss of historic fabric and reduction in significance of the heritage asset.”

The building has been allowed to deteriorate further and as highlighted is close to being beyond saving.

The owner has also failed to obtain a good outcome of the public house through seeking a successful outcome with the Save our White Campaign Group.

NHDC is requested to note that this building is being allowed to fall further into disrepair. Its current state blights the locality. The building is Grade II listed asset. It is a much loved heritage asset, as recognised by its status as an Asset of Community Value.

The applicant has previously sought planning permission and failed (see:

https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=5B858879EAF311EBA2DF00155DE2D42B)

NHDC is requested to consider forcing the owner to repair the building and using its powers through a "Repairs Notice" under Section 48 of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 or alternatively its powers under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (see:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/stoppingtherot/heag046b-stopping-the-rot/>)

NHDC HAS THE POWERS TO OBTAIN A GOOD OUTCOME FOR THIS IMPORTANT HERITAGE ASSET AND PRESERVE THE BUILDING AS A VIABLE (NOT MICRO-PUB) PUBLIC HOUSE CONSISTENT WITH ITS GRADE II LISTING. THIS APPLICATION SHOULD BE REJECTED AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S POWERS EXERCISED TO SAVE THIS HERITAGE ASSET.

I – HARMFUL TO A LISTED BUILDING

The White Horse Kimpton is a Grade II Listed Building (see <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1347310?section=official-list-entry>)

It was listed in 1984.

On the official entry it includes:

“Terrace of houses, public house and shop. 2 storeys. The end houses are early-mid C19 in chequered red brick and with slate roofs. The centre (Nos 22 and 24A) is lower and late C18. Plain red brick. Plain tile roof. Dentilled brick eaves. Glazing bar casements except for No 24, which has recessed 8/8-pane sashes with rubbed brick lintels. The centre has 3 square window bays with flat hoods. Circa 1980 porch to No 20. No 24 has rear extensions in flint with brick dressings. 4 ridge chimney stacks.”

A particular reference is made to “public house” which the White Horse was at the date of listing.

In the Historic England “A Guide for Owners of Listed Buildings” (see: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/guide-for-owners-of-listed-buildings/guide-for-owners-listed-buildings/#:~:text=How%20are%20buildings%20chosen%20for,built%20between%201700%20and%201840>)

It states that “Listing covers the whole building, including the interior, unless parts of it are explicitly excluded in the Listed entry”.

Therefore, the bar and associated fittings associated with this public house are included within the listing.

This guide states that “A new extension should not dominate a historic building: this usually means it should be lower and smaller”

In Historic England Advice Note 10 (see: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/listed-buildings-and-curtilage-advice-note-10/>)

HARMFUL TO A LISTED BUILDING AND ITS HERITAGE SETTING

This development will significantly change the appearance, roofline, footprint and character of The White Horse.

It alters the interior and exterior it adds a massive modern extension and additional outbuildings. It completely changes the footprint (see: https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=53030C8A6F0C4F148DC022CFC2647C93)

The development proposes: -

- Loss of the Original Bar

THIS IS HARMFUL AS THE LOSS OF THE BAR CHANGES ITS CONNECTION AS A HISTORIC PUBLIC HOUSE

- Massive Extension

THE PROPOSED ELEVATIONS (see https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=53030C8A6F0C4F148DC022CFC2647C6F) COMPLETELY CHANGES THE APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING. IT NO LONGER RESEMBLES "A Terrace of houses, public house and shop" WHEN VIEWED FROM THE COURTYARD. IT APPEARS AS A MODERN MONSTROSITY.

It will alter the visual experience of the asset and the appreciation of the asset within its setting.

The proposed development changes the building from a public house to single dwelling and "micro-pub".

The proposed development is considered "harmful" to the heritage asset.

Per paras 199 - 208 of NPPF (see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>)

Para 202 of NPPF states: "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT I CONSIDER HARMS THE HERITAGE ASSET. IT DOES NOT SECURE ITS OPTIMUM VIABLE USE. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE "MICRO-PUB" IS VIABLE WHEREAS THE ORIGINAL PUB IS CONSIDERED VIABLE AS IT OFFERS A GREATER OFFERING AND IS SUPPORTED BY THE SAVE OUR WHITE HORSE CAMPAIGN GROUP

II - CONFLICTS WITH NHDC LOCAL PLAN AND NPPF 93

The NHDC Local Plan (see: <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/North%20Hertfordshire%20Local%20Plan%202011-2031.pdf>) is used to determine applications.

The NHDC Local Plan (2011 – 2031) (See: <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/North%20Hertfordshire%20Local%20Plan%202011-2031.pdf>) provides some guidance in respect of this development.

Para 5.35 states “These facilities should be protected wherever possible and the policy seeks to prevent their loss. However, where it can be shown such facilities are no longer needed and not viable, then permission may be granted for a change of use. Planning Applications seeking a change of use that is not for shops, services or similar facilities will need to be supported with evidence that at least twelve months of active marketing has been undertaken. This will include an assessment of market signals, including that the marketing has been conducted appropriately given the terms, rental values and / or sales values of the site and similar properties, the benefits of the proposed use(s) and the impact on the community of such a loss of shops, services or similar facilities.”

NO ACTIVE MARKETTING HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN. THE PROPERTY IS CLEARLY NEEDED AS EVIDENCED BY THE FORMATION OF THE SAVE OUR WHITE HORSE CAMPAIGN GROUP

Para 5.37 states “Some local facilities, such as pubs, can be listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). This provides additional protections if the owners wish to change the use of, demolish and / or sell the facility. The fact that a facility is an ACV can be an additional material consideration in the determination of any planning applications. The Monitoring and Delivery section of this Plan provides additional information on ACVs.

NHDC IS REQUESTED TO NOTE THAT THE WHITE HORSE IS AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE AND THIS IS THEREFORE A MATERIAL CONSIDERATION.