



Campaign for Pubs

Promote, Support and Protect Pubs

North Hertfordshire District Council
Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City,
SG6 3JF

20 February 2025

Sent to planning.control@north-herts.gov.uk (Tom Rea - Case Officer)

North Hertfordshire District Council - Planning Application 25/00090/FP

The Campaign for Pubs objects to this planning application.

The current proposal is essentially the same as previous rejected applications and as such should itself be rejected.

As highlighted by many local residents, the White Horse is steeped in history and was a thriving business for many years, operating successfully alongside the other pub in Kimpton Village, The Boot. Kimpton is a large village with population of over 2,000; the two pubs have catered for the local community's needs in different ways with a population sufficient to support both. Local residents successfully applied for the pub to be registered as an Asset of Community Value in 2015 which was renewed in 2020, so it is clear that the pub is valued by the local community.

Our objection

On behalf of many millions of pub users throughout England, our trust is that North Hertfordshire District Council also recognises in the importance of pubs and that a community needs a beating heart and that part of that heart is a good, wholesome, happy public house. This is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Policies 83 and 92 of NPPF says that councils should seek to plan positively for the provision of pubs and to resist their loss:

Section 83 d) states "the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship",

Section 92 states "To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

On this basis alone, the Council should reject the planning application as it goes against 'planning positively for the provision of community facilities, including public houses.'

In addition, we would expect the Council to respect guidance from the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (Proposed Submission 2011-2031), in particular:

2.61 2 - Objective: "To promote sustainable growth within our District to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities, whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage"

Campaign for Pubs, The Volunteer Arms, 5 Watson Street, Holgate, York YO24 4BH

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Policy SP10 a. "Support the retention of existing community, cultural, leisure or recreation facilities"

4.119: "National policy recognises that the planning system plays a role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Community and recreation facilities together with green spaces can play an important role in the life of local people enabling people not only to participate in physical activities but also in cultural pastimes, all of which can help to enhance physical, spiritual and mental well being. "

Policy SP13 a. "Maintaining a strong presumption in favour of the retention, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting;"

The pub was registered as an Asset of Community Value in 2015 and renewed in 2020; in accordance with the non statutory advice note to local authorities by the (then) Minister (late) Rt Hon Don Foster MP that ACV registration ought to be viewed as a material planning consideration and that Inspectors have held that ACV status is sufficient grounds to robustly resist proposals for the loss of pub use e.g. Chesham Arms, Hackney 2013.

Pubs play a vital role in small communities. They help establish a community spirit and a source of information and assistance for residents, while also helping to reduce mental health issues related to loneliness and isolation. They provide employment in the community and are often a source of other related activities such as sports clubs which improve the general health and wellbeing of the community. They're also, when run well by a committed and enthusiastic landlord, a lot of fun.

Other pubs in similar situations have proved able to thrive as living proof that a village needs its pub which performs a vital function as a social hub and unique resource.

Conversely, it would be a disaster for the local community if the White Horse were allowed to go the same way as so many other pubs and rob the local population of its community hub.

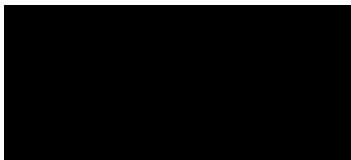
Once it is gone, it is gone - and will never return!

As with many other attempts to change the use of a valued public house, much is made of the pub being unviable. There are numerous examples around the country of pubs which can thrive with effective business planning and management. There is no reason why this may not also be the case for the White Horse.

The loss of a vital community facility which could, with the right intervention, become a thriving and important public resource is surely against the principles of any Council.

We are trusting that common sense will prevail and, in making a decision, the Council will see that the case has simply not been made that planning permission should be granted to destroy this historic pub and furthermore that Kimpton needs this public house.

Yours sincerely,



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