

Comment for planning application 24/03218/F

Application Number	24/03218/F
Location	Church View Manor Road Great Bourton OX17 1QP
Proposal	Change of Use of The Bell Inn Public House (Sui Generis Use) to use as a dwellinghouse (Class C3 Use) and associated minor external alterations to the building and works
Case Officer	Shona King
Organisation	
Name	Oliver Pomfret
Address	Meadow View,School Lane,Great Bourton,Banbury,OX17 1QY
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour
Comments	<p>I've been living in Great Bourton for the past 20 years. I've grown up with the village and The Bell has always been at the centre of it.</p> <p>As with many rural communities, there are very few amenities available; there is no shop, a bus service which is infrequent at best, a village hall that requires booking in advance, and The Bell. It was the heart of the community and allowed a social location, for old friends and new, to meet and catch up. Countless social events have been held at the bell, and for many people it holds fond memories. As a young adult in the village, looking to purchase their first property, the lack of a pub would be a significant factor that would persuade me and others in my position, to move to a location that does.</p> <p>Not only does The Bell provide an opportunity to socialise on a causal basis, but for many isolated members of the community, it is a crucial facilitator of personal contact that they may not have on a daily basis. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic which highlighted the impact of mental health and the impact of restricted socialisation, consideration should be given to allow individuals the opportunity to maintain a healthy level of casual contact via the Bell.</p> <p>On an economic level, the pub assists with hosting guests that visit the village. For locals, it's a chance to show their guests the tradition and beauty that a local village pub can offer. For visitors that come to stay in the various local accommodations, it provides a hot meal and pleasant atmosphere to spend some time. The removal of the Bell will have impacts on the caravan site, and other local businesses, providing a negative knock on effect for the area.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Bell has been vital in the hosting of various church events, often assisting the church by hosting donation buckets and encouraging patrons to support the village. Given the extensive renovations that have been undertaken on the bell tower, and the ever increasing cost of upkeep on the church itself, by losing the centre of community spirit, the village is in a position to lose it's last remaining remnants of a traditional village.</p> <p>For those currently in the village, the memories of the bell have been darkened with the knowledge that it intends to be made into a house, with no prior consent. The Bell has been through many iterations over the years, with each landlord putting their distinct style and twist on the pub. All of these changes have brought the village and its guests, closer together. For the first time in living memory, a constant in the village's history, is being taken away, and replaced by something that doesn't serve the community in the same way. The emotional impact on the residents is undeniable-this is not just a building, but a symbol of the village's unity, a place that has withstood time and change.</p> <p>I urge the counsel to consider rejecting this planning application.</p>
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Attachments	