Harper, Suzanne

From: planningcomments@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 19 April 2018 10:51
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories: Blue Category

Application Reference No. : DET/2018/0010 Site Address: First and Second Floor Old Court House High Street Leek Staffordshire ST13 5DZ Leek
Comments by: Matthew Hansell
From:

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Submission: Objection
Comments: Dear Sir

I am writing to you to object to the planning application for The Old Courthouse on High St/Field St, Leek, Application Number: DET/2018/0010

I am one of the current tenants on the first floor of the building (Courts 1 & 2). We began our tenancy in February 2014. We set up initially as a recording studio/rehearsal rooms for our bands but it wasn't long before we found ourselves, by accident at first and then by intent, welcoming young, local bands in to our space to rehearse and record demos, all on a not-for-profit basis (we are not a business). Many of these bands began their careers here, some still use it to this day. The following year, more musicians and producers took up residence in the building. Paul set up his studio on the second floor, David set up his rehearsal rooms further down the corridor from us on the first floor, and we quickly became an important community musical hub, working together for many of our town's innovative and creative talent. All of us were/are keen to promote this creativity and talent in a town that is not only known for it's musical heritage, but is also currently enjoying somewhat of an artistic and musical renaissance with the growth of The Foxlowe (who are booking nationally and internationally renowned artists, some of whom have been supported by musicians who use our space), the emergence of the very successful Leek Blues and Americana Festival and It's commitment to localism which has breathed new life in to this wonderful town

I strongly believe that, if the planning application is granted and the building is converted in to flats, Leek will lose a vital artistic community facility that will be very detrimental to the cultural development of the town, especially for young people. The three tenants of The Old Courthouse work closely together to provide these facilities, much-loved by the people who use them and benefit from them, and it would be very unlikely that the three of us could find another building with the right specifications that we could set up in and continue to provide these services to the community.

Therefore, may I urge you to reject the planning application so that we can continue to help Leek further it's goals of being the most vibrant, entertaining, culturally significant, artistic town in Staffordshire.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Matthew Hansell

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