

As Chair of the White Swan Music and Arts Heritage Sub Committee, I am writing to object to the proposed change of use of The White Swan pub from commercial to residential use, and to voice concerns that the plans submitted by the owners present a substantial risk to the Charlton Village Conservation Area.

The submitted plans by the owners, include the addition of a substantial third floor in the style of a boxy modern building, and the full horizontal length of the building creating an additional floor with additional windows inlaid into a flat roof above the new rectangular boxy third floor.

We would ask the planning committee to take into consideration the late Victorian style of the White Swan Building and the visual impact of adding a large rectangular brick block on the top.

The application mentions in the heritage statement the existence of a historical third floor – a photograph of the period shows two small dormer windows on the backdrop of a subtle mansard roof, tiled with what appears to be slate and two beautiful ornate gables - a masterpiece of Victorian architecture.



(Image Stephen Harris of pubshistory.com)

The owners proposed plan, shows a rectangular brick floor placed on top of the existing two story building and on top of that, an additional row of windows set into the flat roof, creating a giant brick rectangle dwarfing both buildings either side. The proposal, in effect, adds two layers of windows on top of the White Swan with little regard for the At Risk conservation area status, neither the heritage style nor aesthetics of the existing building or the sheer size in relation to the rest of the structures in Charlton Village.

It is the belief of the Heritage subcommittee, that the plans submitted by the owners constitute an unsympathetic alteration in terms of materials, size, design and concept and would ask the planning committee to reject this application to protect and conserve the characteristics of this locally listed building in line with the Royal Greenwich Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework concerning local heritage assets. We would ask any proposed future development and work inside and outside the building to employ materials and style in keeping with late Victorian architecture and insist that works already carried out to the upstairs interior of the building without any planning permission, are restored to their former condition with respect to the original panelling, features and fireplaces restored by artisans qualified to undertake such a restoration.