



Dear Village Life Reader

July 2021

The owners of The Black Horse pub, Grimston have submitted another planning application by carving up the upstairs publican living accommodation to form a separate residential flat for sale or rent. The application will appear soon on MBC's website. Please keep an eye on the planning site and, when the application appears, lodge an objection. We encourage you to do this individually, rather than collectively as a household, as it has more impact at the Council.

Please note the following points:

- The pub is the only remaining pub in the three-village parish of Grimston, Saxelbye and Shoby and has been in existence since before 1753.
- In November 2020, 75% of the parish returned a completed village survey overwhelmingly indicating (over 90%) the need to retain the pub.
- The **whole pub premises** are registered as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). Judge Findlay, when she dismissed the owners' appeal against the ACV in December 2020, said that the publican's flat on the first floor is integral to the economic unit of the pub and protected by the ACV. In other words, the pub needs the whole flat upstairs for the publican's use to remain economically viable. This opinion was supported by the pub expert, with over 30 years' experience, who completed the RICS Red Book valuation report paid for by the community.
- Each of the three previous owner-publicans have expanded the upstairs accommodation as it was not sufficient for modern-day family living. This application attempts to reduce the publican's accommodation to even less than the original facilities that were in place for over 300 years and found lacking! This will significantly limit the experienced tenant or owner who can be attracted to operate the pub business.
- This is a Trojan-horse planning application that would significantly impact the economic viability of the pub business, bringing about

the breakup of the pub and, ultimately, result in the loss of the whole pub to private accommodation.

- The application to create an upstairs residential flat and put in rear access will reduce the existing outside pub trading areas and their use, such as the loss of the current outside shelter; remove the ability to extend the toilets and provide a disabled toilet and improved disabled access; remove the ability to reconfigure the current trading layout; remove the ability to extend, expand and improve pub trading facilities in the future; reduce existing pub storage facilities.
- Any upstairs residential flat will not be able to park on site due to a restrictive covenant which will result in additional parking requirements on the village street, in addition to existing residential and pub demands.
- The owners have not been realistic in their asking price (demanding £550k, versus the £435k they paid in 2017, even though the pub is closed and the market is depressed. They have rejected two offers from the community and, even though they asked the community to obtain funding from the Community Ownership Fund to help buy the pub, have now applied to break up the pub before the details of the COF have even been announced.

I urge you to support the community against the developers and submit an objection on the Melton Borough Council website. Even just submitting "I object" will count. Details can be found at [www.melton.gov.uk/info/200337/planning](http://www.melton.gov.uk/info/200337/planning), click on "View Planning Applications and Decisions", click on "Search for a planning application" and then enter "Grimston" in the keyword search.

Mike Petty – Chair

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**<https://blackhorsecommunitygroup.com/>**