

From: *REDACTED*

Sent: 22 April 2026 14:18

To: NCC - Planning <Planning@newport.gov.uk>

Subject: REF: 26/0212 – Change of use from office (Use Class E) to an apart hotel at 51–52 High Street, Newport

Dear Planning Team,

I am writing on behalf of Music Venue Properties, the freehold owner of the building occupied by Le Pub at 14 High Street, Newport NP20 1FW, to formally object to the above application.

Music Venue Properties exists to secure the long-term future of grassroots music venues and we are proud to have secured the future of Le Pub as a key cultural asset in Newport, purchasing the property to ensure it remains in use for the benefit of the local community and the wider region.

Unfortunately, this application raises a number of clear and avoidable concerns in its current form that threaten this important cultural asset and others in the area. We note that Music Venue Trust has also submitted a formal objection to this application in relation to Le Pub, McCann's and the Corn Exchange. Their concerns reflect the same risks we are seeing here at a local level.

The application site sits within one of the most active parts of Newport's city centre and a core part of its night-time economy. This is a nightlife-led area where activity regularly continues into the early hours, including live and amplified music, high volumes of people moving between venues, and leaving the venues at the end of the night. This activity is lawful, well-established, licensed and is a fundamental part of what makes Newport attractive.

Placing short-stay accommodation into the middle of this environment is not a neutral decision, but instead it introduces a use that will be incredibly sensitive to the very conditions that already exist and are expected in this area.

What is most concerning is how little of this has been properly addressed within the application. There has been no public consultation, no noise impact assessment, and no acoustic design strategy submitted. As others have already highlighted, this means the application has not properly identified or assessed the existing soundscape of the area. Despite this, the application suggests there will be no impact on amenities. That conclusion is not credible without supporting evidence.

This lack of proper assessment and mitigation will lead to a situation that has been seen repeatedly across the UK. Guests arrive expecting a standard hotel environment. Instead, they encounter a busy, established night-time economy. Complaints follow, and those complaints are directed at the venues that were already there.

Over time, this leads to increased involvement from Environmental Health, licensing reviews, and pressure to reduce hours or activity. This is how venues are gradually restricted, despite operating responsibly and within their license. In practical terms, that means the developer should be demonstrating at this stage, how the building will perform in the worst-case conditions created by surrounding venues. That evidence is simply not there.

The principle here is straightforward: if you introduce a new use into an existing environment, you take responsibility for managing the impacts of that decision. There is no evidence within this application that this has been properly considered or addressed, and the risk is therefore being pushed onto existing venues.

Le Pub is not just another commercial unit. It is a long-standing grassroots music venue and a key part of Newport's cultural infrastructure. It has also played an important role in supporting wider regeneration, including activity linked to the reopening of the Corn Exchange and establishment of Newport Music Trail.

Policy SP12 of the Newport Local Development Plan (2011–2026) recognises venues of this kind as community facilities and states that development affecting them should be designed to retain or enhance them. From our position as freeholder, this proposal does neither. It introduces a clear risk of operational pressure that could affect the venue's long-term future.

There is increasing recognition, both nationally and locally, that grassroots venues need to be actively protected. Once they are lost, they are rarely replaced. We, alongside members of the local community, have invested in this building specifically to avoid that outcome, and developments that introduce avoidable conflict without proper mitigation undermine that effort. We see this pattern regularly across the UK, and it rarely ends well for the venues involved.

We support the principle of bringing vacant buildings back into use. However, in this case, the proposed use and the lack of proper assessment and mitigation create a clear risk to existing businesses and the wider night-time economy.

This is not an objection to development in principle. It is an objection to a form of development that is fundamentally at odds with its surroundings and has not been adequately thought through.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the application is refused.

Yours faithfully,

REDACTED

For and on behalf of Music Venue Properties