

Pub Protection and Planning

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INTRODUCTION

We have compiled a good deal of advice and guidance on how best to use the planning system to protect pubs which are, or might be, under threat of closure or unwanted alteration. Some of this guidance is aimed at all pub campaigners, CAMRA or otherwise, whilst other material is targeted specifically at CAMRA Branches. This document aims to bring that material together in one place, for ease of reference. Here we summarise what is available – all the documents mentioned can be found elsewhere in this section.

PROTECTING INDIVIDUAL PUBS

“Saving Your Local Pub” This document contains comprehensive advice and guidance on mounting and sustaining campaigns to save pubs under threat. Alongside can be found detailed information about relevant planning law and processes. The document is aimed at anyone, CAMRA or otherwise, who is trying to save their local pub. If you're contacted by a group in this position, please make sure that they get this guidance. Because legislation differs somewhat from country to country, we have separate documents for England, Scotland and Wales.

Conversions of Pubs to Other Uses Since May 2017, thanks to our campaigning efforts, planning permission is now needed to convert pubs to restaurants, shops and offices or to demolish pubs. This will hopefully lead to a significant reduction in the number of pubs being converted or demolished. Resisting any planning applications which do materialise can be pursued using the guidance in 'Saving Your Local Pub'.

Assets of Community Value (ACVs) Before the May 2017 changes mentioned above, ACV registration was the only way that campaigners could directly get permitted development rights removed from pubs. Now that all pubs are protected, there is no particular need for CAMRA itself to pursue registrations. Branches are however encouraged to support community groups who are nominating a pub because they might wish to bid for it should it come up for sale; ACV status can also be useful when resisting planning applications as it shows clearly that the pub is valued by the local community.

Statutory Listing Pubs which are 'listed' as being of architectural or historic importance enjoy an enhanced level of protection e.g. they can't be altered internally or demolished without consent from the Council. Information about the listing process is at www.heritagepubs.org.uk/pubsaslistedbuildings.asp. Unfortunately, Historic England has recently tightened up its criteria for accepting applications but it can still be worth a try.

WIDER PROTECTION FOR PUBS

Local Plans These contain the planning policies which Councils use (along with national policies) when deciding on planning applications. Many Councils, but not enough, have policies which are specific on protecting pubs. Branches are strongly urged to find out what policies their local Councils have adopted and to take action if they are inadequate. Please see our detailed advice and guidance elsewhere.

FURTHER HELP AND INFORMATION

Assistance for Branches and Members Both staff at HQ and volunteers from Planning Advisory Group are always more than happy to assist with any planning issues and queries. In the first instance please contact Paul Ainsworth – paul.ainsworth@camra.org.uk

Planning Appeal Decisions We maintain a register – www.camra.org.uk/planning-appeal-decisions – of planning appeal decisions relevant to pubs. These can be very useful in terms of

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precedent when another pub finds itself in a similar position to one where an appeal has already been decided.

Public House Viability Test (PHVT) We have developed the PHVT to help Councils protect pubs in their areas and to assist third parties (like CAMRA activists) in influencing Councils to come to the right decision. The Test comprises a set of detailed questions, the answers to which should address the question “What could this pub achieve if it was being properly run?”

